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**Kentucky's Plan for Putting  
*KENTUCKY READING FIRST*  
Revised March 19, 2003**

**Introduction and Overview**

Kentucky has dedicated time, energy, and resources to enhancing reading achievement across the Commonwealth. Our Governor has stated that Kentucky will focus its literacy efforts on adequately preparing its citizens to meet the opportunities and challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. His message established a sense of urgency for all educators to make eliminating illiteracy a priority throughout the Commonwealth. Despite these efforts, participating in Reading First will allow Kentucky for the first time to intentionally and systemically focus on scientifically based reading research in all primary (K-3) classrooms and eliminate shortfalls of current reading initiatives.

The Kentucky Literacy Partnership (KLP), established by the Governor in 1999, will serve as the Reading First Leadership Team. This partnership is represented by seven agencies charged to coordinate statewide literacy efforts among the public and community entities that share an interest in improving the reading and literacy skills of children and adults throughout Kentucky. The Partnership will continue to provide the leadership necessary to effectively implement and monitor the Kentucky Reading First initiative. The vision of the Partnership serves all reading and literacy initiatives in Kentucky. The Partnership vision is:

*Each Kentuckian possesses the reading skills necessary to be a healthy and successful worker, family member, learner and citizen.*

Each partner agency has its own goal for improving reading achievement in Kentucky to reach this vision. The Kentucky Department of Education's goal is to get every student reading at or above the proficient level. While reaching proficiency equals 100 on a scale of 140, it requires skills far beyond the basic level of reading achievement. A fourth grade student who has reached proficiency in reading demonstrates

- overall knowledge of the text, including some inferential as well as literal information.
- knowledge of word meaning, word identification strategies, and an understanding of textual features.
- an overall understanding of literary, informational, persuasive, and practical/workplace texts.
- a developed understanding of literary elements (e.g., setting, characters, plot, and problem/solution).
- understanding of text features (e.g., lists, tables, graphs, etc.) when reading informational texts.
- understanding of fact and author's opinion when reading persuasive texts.
- understanding of text (e.g., locating and applying information for authentic purposes, interpreting specialized vocabulary, and following directions) when reading practical/workplace texts.
- clear and accurate communication skills supported with sufficient details and/or examples from the text.
- clear connections between text, prior knowledge, and/or real-world issues.

Reading First will be the impetus for fulfilling this vision and the KDE goal by focusing on the early years of reading development. Research shows that children who read well in the early grades are far more successful in later years. Reading First will focus on improving reading achievement in the primary

years (K-3) to establish a strong foundation for reading development. Reading First and the leadership established to support its implementation will provide Kentucky with a seamless, coherent approach to improving reading instruction based on the findings of scientifically based reading research. The goals of the Reading First plan in Kentucky include the following to

- ❖ improve each child's capacity to become a successful, proficient reader – reading at or above grade level by the end of the primary years (grade 3).
- ❖ build on and promote coordination of all reading/literacy initiatives in the state to improve overall effectiveness in improving reading instruction.
- ❖ target Kentucky's lowest performing and disadvantaged schools to enhance student achievement through: 1) increased professional development, 2) implementation of scientifically based reading programs, 3) high-quality instruction focused on the five components of effective reading instruction, 4) the use of valid and reliable assessment data, and 5) ongoing support through technical assistance.
- ❖ ensure that high-quality instruction related to scientifically based reading research, including explicit and systematic instruction in the five essential components of effective reading instruction (phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, fluency, and comprehension), occurs in all Reading First districts and schools.
- ❖ design and implement a three-tiered statewide professional development plan for all Reading First educators that is grounded in scientifically based reading research and is aligned to Reading First goals.
- ❖ establish a network of Reading Coaches at the state, district, and school levels that are highly knowledgeable in scientifically based reading research and will provide and assist in professional development and ongoing technical assistance.
- ❖ assist Reading First districts/schools in the implementation of effective reading programs that coherently integrate these four components: 1) screening, diagnosis, and classroom based assessments that are valid and reliable; 2) instructional programs and aligned materials that include explicit instruction in the five components of reading instruction; 3) aligned professional development plan; and 4) provide dynamic instructional leadership.
- ❖ assist Reading First districts/schools in the implementation of a comprehensive assessment plan to include screening, diagnostic, and classroom-based monitoring assessments to be used to guide instructional decisions in the classroom.
- ❖ conduct a state level evaluation, in cooperation with the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development, of all Reading First schools to determine program effectiveness, progress, and growth.

Each participating agency in the KLP will be actively involved in the decision-making, professional development, and ongoing technical assistance associated with Reading First activities. This will ensure that reading initiatives within the state will adhere to the dissemination, understanding, and application of scientifically based reading research and the goals outlined above.

### **Need for Reading First in Kentucky**

Kentucky's scores on national and state tests indicate some progress in reading achievement over the past five years. Current data suggest that our state's approach to improving reading has been somewhat successful. This is evident in the results outlined below from the 1998 4<sup>th</sup> grade National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), the California Test of Basic Skills, and the Commonwealth Assessment and Testing System.

### NAEP Results

- ❖ Kentucky was one of only three states (with Connecticut and Colorado) to make statistically significant reading gains from 1992 to 1994 and from 1994 to 1998.
- ❖ Kentucky 4<sup>th</sup> grade readers began two points below the national average in 1992, equaled the national average in 1994, and moved three points above the national average in 1998.
- ❖ Compared to its 1992 performance, Kentucky increased five points while the nation recorded no overall increase and the Southeast declined by one point.
- ❖ Kentucky's 8<sup>th</sup> grade readers outscored the nation and the Southeast in reading.

### Statewide Reading Assessment Data

- ❖ The California Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) yearly averages in reading have also increased steadily over the past four years. The Reading NCE (normal curve equivalency) scores averaged 49.33 in 1997 and increased to 54.8 in 2001.
- ❖ Statewide reading scores on the Kentucky Core Content Test (KCCT) have increased every year since 1997. The KCCT results for reading averaged 78.89 in the initial year (1999) and increased to 80.69 in 2001 and to 81.89 in 2002.

Even though our overall results on NAEP and the state accountability testing data continue to show progress, we still face greater challenges with many historically underachieving populations that provide a need for a more intentional and systemic focus on scientifically based reading research.

### ***Low-income:***

21.2% of Kentucky children live in poverty, compared to the national average of 18.9%. Districts and schools participating in Reading First will include those identified for school improvement under section 1116(b) of Title I of the ESEA and those who have the highest numbers or percentages of children in the state who are counted by the USDOE under section 1124(c) of Title I of the ESEA.

According to the 2002 Kentucky Core Content Test reading data, 52% of the 4<sup>th</sup> grade students with free/reduced lunch approved status scored below proficiency.

### ***Racial/ethnic groups:***

Evidence of Kentucky's continuing struggle with educational equity can be seen in our most recent data that indicates that 61% of African American 4<sup>th</sup> grade students performed below proficiency.

### ***Limited English Proficiency:***

Kentucky has one of the fastest growing Limited English Proficient (LEP) populations in the United States. The growth rate has been approximately 200% since 1995. In 1998-99 there were 4,529 LEP students enrolled in Kentucky public schools. The students represent approximately 85 different languages. Kentucky is one of 36 states to offer an ESL/LEP teaching endorsement or certification, and there are 200 teachers certified to teach ESL/LEP; however, there are only 77 teachers employed as ESL/LEP teachers (Annual U.S. Dept. of Ed. Surveys conducted by KDE).

Three out of four students with limited English at all grade levels qualify for free or reduced-price lunches by living near or below the poverty line (Fleischman & Hopstock, 1993). The lack of any strong literacy or academic background, in addition to the challenge of learning to read in a second language, puts many English language learners, particularly those in high poverty, at risk for developing reading difficulties (USDOE, 1999).

According to the 2002 KCCT Reading data, 64% of the 4<sup>th</sup> grade students identified as limited English proficient (LEP) students are performing below proficiency. In order to rectify this low level of reading achievement, all Reading First professional development will include strategies for working with students who are culturally and linguistically diverse readers and whose first language is not English. In Kentucky Reading First, LEP teachers, general educators, and K-12 exceptional children educators will work together to ensure reading success for LEP students.

The Equity Division of the Kentucky Department of Education will work collaboratively with Kentucky Reading First staff to ensure an emphasis on cultural responsiveness for all racial/ethnic groups in Kentucky. This division will be able to provide direct support and technical assistance for students, educators, and communities within eligible Reading First districts. Internally, the Division of Equity also acts as a conduit and support to all divisions within KDE by providing services and developing mechanisms in areas of equity, multicultural education, and cultural diversity. The Division of Equity works in conjunction with the Division of Human Resources to provide quality professional development, monitor compliance issues, and address internal KDE issues with attention to cultural diversity, inclusion, and equity.

***Special education:***

The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) has outlined an action agenda to achieve quality conditions for teaching and learning that highlights three outcomes:

- that every student with exceptionalities receives individualized services and supports from caring and competent professional educators,
- that every special and general educator has the teaching and learning conditions to practice effectively, and
- that every instructional leader establishes strong expectations for the use of effective and validated instructional practices.

According to the 2002 KCCT reading data, 64% of the 4<sup>th</sup> grade students identified with a disability scored below proficient. All special education students are included in Kentucky's state assessment. In order to meet the growing needs of the special education population in Kentucky, KY Reading First will require general educators and special educators to work together more frequently to ensure achievement for all students. Special educators K-12 will participate in Kentucky Reading First professional development through a systematic and focused infrastructure via the Kentucky Special Education Cooperatives, guided by the action agenda of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC).

In response to the apparent achievement gaps present, recent Kentucky legislation - Senate Bill 168 - has been passed to focus on reducing the achievement gaps in public schools. This legislation parallels many aspects of the No Child Left Behind Act and requires schools and districts to focus on the student performance levels of the subgroups identified above. Statewide professional development programs and technical assistance will be required to focus on reducing the achievement gap.

Kentucky Reading First will focus on raising reading achievement for all primary students in Kentucky, with particular attention to these disaggregated subgroup populations and to the schools these students attend. The KDE will assist local districts and schools that continue struggling to meet the needs of these students. Reading First will ensure: 1) increased and enhanced professional development, 2) implementation of scientifically based reading programs, 3) high-quality instruction focused on the five components of effective reading instruction, 4) the use of valid and reliable assessment data, and 5)

ongoing support through technical assistance to so that all students receive high-quality instruction and read at or above grade level by the end of the primary years (3<sup>rd</sup> grade).

## **Kentucky Context**

Any discussion of initiatives in the state of Kentucky must be set within the context of the Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA) of 1990. A brief description of the major components of the legislation that pertain to the successful implementation of Reading First in Kentucky follows.

### **Kentucky Education Reform Act State Guidelines:**

The Kentucky Education Reform Act resulted from a Kentucky Supreme Court ruling that declared the state public school system unconstitutional on the basis of inequity and inadequacy of funding to schools. The Kentucky General Assembly was given the charge to create a new system of common schools that would provide a quality education to all students regardless of where they live in Kentucky. To address this charge, the General Assembly established six goals for education in Kentucky.

1. Schools must expect a high level of achievement for all students.
2. Schools must develop all students' abilities to
  - a. use basic communication and mathematics skills for real-life situations.
  - b. apply principles from math, sciences, arts, humanities, social studies and practical living studies to real-life situations.
  - c. become self-sufficient individuals.
  - d. become responsible members of families, work groups, or communities.
  - e. think and solve problems in school situations and in life.
  - f. connect and integrate experiences and new knowledge with what was previously learned and to acquire new information through various sources.
3. Schools are to improve their students' rate of school attendance.
4. Schools are to reduce their students' dropout and retention rates.
5. Schools are to reduce physical and mental health barriers to learning.
6. Schools are to be measured on the proportion of students making a successful transition to work, Postsecondary education, or the military.

These six education goals and the six learner goals embedded in Goal 2 established the context in which Kentucky schools should operate. To support these goals, the Kentucky General Assembly designed and funded a number of initiatives that now comprise the state's system of education and established a structure in which schools and districts can utilize a comprehensive school reading program to improve achievement and success for all students. A brief overview of the KERA programs provides a context with which to understand the key elements and strategies proposed in the Kentucky Reading First plan since these strategies are designed to build local capacity through enhancing Kentucky's system of public education.

### ***1. KERA Context: Assessment and Accountability System***

A strong assessment and school accountability system based on the principle of high standards for all students is the foundation for reform efforts in Kentucky. The mission of the system is to elevate student performance to dramatically higher levels by articulating what students should know and be able to do and holding schools accountable for student performance. Kentucky is the only state that has historically included all children, including all students with disabilities, in its assessment and accountability system. The resulting Kentucky Instructional Results Information System (KIRIS, 1990-1998) was primarily performance-based, set standards to identify a proficient student based on established Academic

Expectations, and included a system of rewards and assistance based on each school's performance index. The Council on School Performance Standards was established and charged with developing the Academic Expectations, adopted by the Kentucky Board of Education in 1994.

As with KIRIS, the CATS includes a system of financial rewards to schools that are doing well. Conversely, schools that receive low accountability results are eligible to receive financial assistance through the Commonwealth School Improvement Funds or through the services of a Highly Skilled Educator (HSE). These individuals are trained to assist low performing schools through an intensive and sustained effort intended to raise student performance. The HSEs are released from their regular responsibilities in their own school districts and assigned to low performing schools in other districts. They typically work with one school on a full time basis during the accountability cycle.

All HSEs in the state of Kentucky will participate in professional development designed to help them understand Kentucky Reading First activities and the federal and state research base.

## **2. KERA Context: High Standards and Curriculum**

It is the belief in Kentucky that high standards result in greater academic achievement by children and better instruction by teachers. As noted earlier, the Council on School Performance developed the Academic Expectations, which were refined and adopted formally by the Kentucky Board of Education in 1994. The curriculum in Kentucky's schools links content and instructional practice with student learning and assessment. *Transformations: Kentucky's Curriculum Framework* (appendix A) aligns the learner goals, the Academic Expectations, and assessment strategies enacted through or developed as a result of educational reform. That framework provides direction to all schools about the general curriculum focus at each grade and in each subject. The state-mandated *Program of Studies for Kentucky's Schools* (available on the KDE website) provides a coherent instructional design for reading content through the various grades and is mandated for all public schools in Kentucky. *Core Content for Assessment* (available on the KDE website) addresses the content that will be emphasized in the assessment program.

All of these materials have been developed with extensive teacher input and have been presented in numerous regional training sessions and in individual school districts and have recently been collected onto a CD ROM and distributed statewide. They are also readily available on the KDE website ([www.kde.state.ky.us](http://www.kde.state.ky.us)). Taken together, these resources enable each school to design its curriculum to address the needs of its students and to align curriculum, instruction, and assessment to achieve the standards set by the state.

In the mandated *Program of Studies*, all components of reading are addressed and integrated with oral language and writing skills into a comprehensive language arts curriculum. All major components of reading identified in Reading First are included within the *Program of Studies* (phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, and reading comprehension) except fluency. In Kentucky's Reading First plan, any reading approach or program must fit within this curriculum framework and address fluency instruction and practice.

## **3. KERA Context: Support Education Excellence in Kentucky (SEEK)**

SEEK ensures that funds for public education are distributed in a way that provides equal opportunities for all Kentucky children by narrowing the funding gap in per-pupil spending between more and less wealthy districts, by increasing state financial support for education (an increase of 46.5% since 1990), and by encouraging more local financial support. Further, districts are required to allocate a major portion of the SEEK funds to school councils that make determinations of how funds are best spent to improve

instruction at the school. Any long-term capacity-building effort to improve reading or other instruction must help schools and districts look at budget decisions for ways to redirect funds and leverage resources toward more effective service delivery systems and high impact activities (i.e., those with scientifically based reading research). In the Kentucky Reading First plan, part of the local grant application process and technical assistance will address this issue.

#### ***4. KERA Context: School Based Decision Making (SBDM)***

In recognition that decisions made closest to the student are critical to the student's eventual success, each school elects a group of three teachers and two parents to serve with the principal on a decision-making council (some variations in membership exist). These SBDM councils are a crucial part of the KERA legislation. While their school boards are still responsible for setting overall district policies, the SBDM or school council has the authority to make decisions and policies concerning curriculum, instruction, discipline, professional development, and areas that affect the school's learning environment and the academic achievement of its students. In fact, **neither the state nor the LEA has the legal authority to mandate curriculum for any public school in the state of Kentucky.** Each school's SBDM council has the responsibility to choose curriculum for that particular school.

Any long-term capacity-building effort to improve reading or other instruction must help school councils (faculty and parents) understand the importance of scientifically based reading research, including findings across all areas of reading (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary development, and reading comprehension).

In the Kentucky Reading First plan, part of the grant application process and other professional development activities will assist councils in making decisions consistent with Kentucky Reading First guidelines.

#### ***5. KERA Context: Preschool Program***

Kentucky's preschool program, for all free-lunch eligible 4-year-olds and all 3-year-olds with developmental delays, is an integral component of the state's effort to improve readiness skills of children, and to provide parents with the skills, knowledge, and confidence needed to support their child's educational growth. A recent University of Kentucky study found that at-risk 7- and 8-year olds who had attended the preschool program did as well in school as other children their age who were not considered at risk. While longitudinal research since 1991 has consistently shown that the Kentucky Preschool Program is effective in helping children, regardless of race, gender, or disability, to make strong gains that sustain through grade 5 (*Kentucky Preschool Reports*, 1998), one of the areas for program improvement is language development including literacy, based on student assessment results.

#### ***6. KERA Context: Primary Program***

The primary program is an ungraded program that serves children from the time they enter the elementary school program until they are ready to enter the 4<sup>th</sup> grade (traditional "K-3"). During this period, usually four years, students learn in environments that are appropriate for the developmental levels and learning styles of young children. The curriculum and instructional design provide a framework for teachers to identify the skills and abilities of each child.

The primary program is organized to reflect Kentucky's learning goals and Academic Expectations, to effectively develop and align curriculum and instruction to meet these goals, and to use various ways to support and measure a child's continuous progress. The primary program, which is grounded in seven critical attributes including active parent involvement, allows children to learn basic skills in the context



of everyday experiences and natural learning processes. School councils have the authority to determine the configuration of the program and grouping of students. The result is that there is a wide variety across the state, from four-year groupings (5-8 year olds), to dual age, to predominantly single age groups. In many cases, kindergarten children are not in separate classes, nor is there a discernible “first grade.”

Primary teachers establish classroom environments that support individual and group instruction to meet the needs of all children. The instruction includes skill-specific activities as well as integration across content areas and skills. Given Kentucky’s *Program of Studies*, reading and specific skills are learned as part of a comprehensive language arts program that includes oral language development, writing, and critical thinking as well as the areas identified in Kentucky Reading First (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension). In addition to regular reading instruction, teachers of primary students are responsible for infusing critical language skills into all academic areas including science, math, social studies, writing, and the arts to provide a highly coordinated, motivational education program that will reinforce reading and reading comprehension skills.

In the Kentucky Reading First plan, the primary program is the setting for the comprehensive reading program.

#### **7. KERA Context: Family Resource/Youth Services Centers (FRYSC)**

The overall principle guiding Family Resource Centers (serving elementary level students and their families) and Youth Services Centers (serving middle and high school students and their families) is to reduce physical and mental health barriers to learning. Removal of these non-academic barriers is essential if students are going to be successful in school. These centers provide health, social and other services to students and their families. Often they are a motivating force that supports student learning, keeps students in school, and families connected with school. Every Kentucky school with 20% or more of student enrollment receiving free and reduced lunch is eligible for a center (1,100 schools out of 1,400).

Core components that the family resource center must address based on local need include: training for new and expectant parents, child care for children aged 2-3 years, after-school care for children aged 4-12 years, coordination of health services, parent training, and family literacy. By involving the entire family in targeted reading and literacy activities, Kentucky has increased student motivation and interest in reading in the long term. Kentucky’s goal is to build families of readers. In Kentucky Reading First, family involvement will continue to be an important component. It is expected that FRYSCs will support Kentucky Reading First activities and programs.

## Section I: IMPROVING READING INSTRUCTION

### **A. Current Reading Initiatives**

This section outlines many of the current reading initiatives that have provided the basis for improving reading instruction and achievement throughout the state. All of these initiatives will be coordinated with Reading First to provide the optimal level of effectiveness and to ensure that all students are reading at or above grade level by the end of the primary years (3<sup>rd</sup> grade).

#### ***I. The Kentucky Department of Education Action Plan***

Kentucky has already made a strong commitment to improving literacy achievement statewide at all levels. Kentucky's drive to improve reading in grades K-12 is an impressive one. It is outlined in the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) Action Plan 2001-2003. The goals include

#### **1.3a School-wide Literacy Planning**

1.3a.1 Develop and implement a comprehensive KDE literacy plan to coordinate cross agency KDE work and staff professional development related to literacy that addresses

- each school having a high quality plan for reading.
- all teachers having the skills to teach students to read.
- all schools having an instructional leader in reading.
- each school addressing special populations.
- each school having adequate resources in reading.
- all KDE staff having skills/knowledge to lead in reading.
- all partners being involved locally.
- 

#### **1.3b Targeted Literacy Resources**

b.1 Adapt and provide reading diagnostic assessment procedures and tools, professional development, and targeted culturally relevant resources particularly to low performing schools and struggling readers at all levels.

b.2 Provide targeted resources and professional development particularly to low performing schools and struggling readers at all levels through Teacher Mentor, Early Reading Incentive Grants, federal literacy, and other available funds.

#### **1.3.c Cross-System Literacy Alignment**

c.1 Teach reading, writing, oral communication, active listening, and media and technology literacy at all levels, P-12.

c.2 Promote and deliver quality teacher preparation and professional development in literacy, in conjunction with teacher preparation programs, institutions of higher education, the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development, the Council on Postsecondary Education, the P-16 Council, and the Education Professional Standards Board.

- c.3 Promote public support for literacy for all students and all Kentuckians through the Kentucky Literacy Partnership, KDE's signatory partners on priorities, the Prichard Committee, and the Council for Postsecondary Education/Department of Adult Education and Literacy.
- c.4 Expand family literacy to all counties through state adult education and Federal Title I Even Start funds.

## ***II. Early Reading Incentive Grants***

The Early Reading Incentive Grant Program was established to “provide grants to schools to support teachers in the implementation of reliable, replicable, research-based reading models that use a balance of instructional strategies, including phonics instruction, to address the diverse learning needs of those [primary] students reading at low levels” (KRS 158.792). Projects serve struggling readers in 29% of all elementary schools in Kentucky.

Twenty-five percent (25%) of Kentucky elementary schools are currently involved in a research-based reading model funded by either Early Reading Incentive or Reading Excellence Grant funds.

## ***III. The Kentucky Literacy Partnership***

Previously mentioned in the introduction, the Kentucky Literacy Partnership, established by Executive Order 99-553, has served to provide oversight to the Reading Excellence Grant program. The KLP coordinates statewide literacy efforts among the public and community entities that share an interest in improving the reading and literacy skills of children throughout Kentucky.

For the purpose of Reading First, the Kentucky Literacy Partnership will serve as the required Reading Leadership Team. The partnership includes the agencies that follow:

- The Department for Adult Education and Literacy
- The Council on Postsecondary Education
- The Kentucky Department of Education
- The Office of Early Childhood Development
- The Education Professional Standards Board
- The Kentucky Institute for Family Literacy
- The Collaborative Center for Literacy Development

## ***IV. The Collaborative Center for Literacy Development***

In July 1998, as part of Senate Bill 186 (KRS 164.0207), the Kentucky General Assembly established the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development: Early Childhood through Adulthood. The Collaborative Center, which is housed at the University of Kentucky, is a partnership among all eight Kentucky state universities and the National Center for Family Literacy.

The Collaborative Center is charged to

- develop and implement a comprehensive research agenda evaluating the early reading models implemented under the Early Reading Incentive Grant Program (also established by Senate Bill 186).
- develop and implement a clearinghouse for information about reading models.
- assist districts located in areas with low reading skills to assess and address identified literacy needs.

- provide professional development and coaching for classroom teachers implementing selected reliable, replicable research-based reading models.
- establish demonstration sites and training for early literacy located at each of the public universities.
- collaborate with public and private postsecondary institutions to provide quality pre-service and professional development in early reading instruction for teachers and administrators.

The Collaborative Center has completed six research investigations related to improved student achievement in literacy. Six more investigations have been accepted for funding.

The Kentucky Reading Project (KRP) is a Collaborative Center professional development initiative designed to provide yearlong graduate level reading courses for elementary teachers. Literacy faculty from Kentucky's eight state universities, and the National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL), developed the curriculum for this initiative, which includes a strong focus on the five components of reading.

The Kentucky Reading Project consists of a ten-day summer institute, four follow-up sessions during the school year, and two in-school coaching visits by university faculty or regional service center consultants for a total of fifteen days of instruction. Teacher teams who apply and are accepted to participate receive paid tuition, a \$350 stipend, and over \$200 in books and teaching materials. Participants develop Literacy Action Plans that are implemented in their classrooms throughout the year. During the past four years 1,264 elementary teachers have been selected to participate in the Kentucky Reading Project.

#### ***V. Connections to Higher Education***

The Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE) set an action agenda that includes examining the teacher preparation course offerings at Kentucky's universities. The KDE will extend involvement beyond the Kentucky Literacy Partnership to collaborate with CPE in examining their programs to strengthen teacher preparation in literacy.

#### ***VI. Early Intervention***

Early diagnosis and intervention are critical in preventing reading difficulties. Kentucky recognizes this important aspect in reading development to ensure that all students are able to read on grade level by the end of the primary program (3<sup>rd</sup> grade).

House Bill 502, enacted in April 2000, provided \$600,000 per year for the Reading Recovery Teacher Leader training project. Under legislative direction, the University of Kentucky has become certified as the 23rd Reading Recovery Training Center in North America. Reading Recovery Teacher Training has now expanded to all eight regional universities.

#### **Identified Gaps in Current Reading Initiatives:**

Despite these efforts, several gaps remain in Kentucky's reading initiatives for the primary program. These include

- consistent application of scientifically based reading research to all reading initiatives.
- effective reading instruction for all historically underachieving populations, including Limited English Proficiency (LEP).
- ongoing intensive intervention for all children not reading on grade level.
- reading coaches at the district and school level to provide on-site, job-embedded, modeling, monitoring, and professional development.
- extensive monitoring and accountability measures to ensure results are achieved.

- expanding professional development in reading to every teacher and administrator.
- targeted professional development on using valid and reliable assessments to inform instruction.
- ensuring that scientifically based reading research is embedded in teacher preparation programs.

The key to Kentucky's ability to fulfill the goals of Reading First to leave no child behind is to build on the success of its current programming, while ensuring that all existing and future reading activities are consistent with the cohesive framework of scientifically based reading research including the five components of effective reading instruction.

### **1.B. State Outline and Rationale for Using Scientifically Based Reading Research**

Successful implementation of Reading First in Kentucky will require a consistent and intentional focus on scientifically based reading research in all state and local Reading First related activities. Capitalizing on the findings of scientifically based reading research will equip our administrators and teachers with knowledge and the skills necessary to effectively change reading instructional practices to ensure that all students can read well by the end of the primary years (3<sup>rd</sup> grade). It will be the responsibility of the KDE to assist districts and schools in developing an understanding of and applying what is known about scientifically based reading research to provide the greatest impact in Reading First classrooms for Kentucky's children. A brief description of the key findings of scientifically based reading research on the essential components of effective reading instruction are provided below.

- 1. Phonemic awareness (PA)** —The ability to hear, identify, and manipulate the individual sounds – phonemes – in spoken words. Phonemic awareness is the understanding that the sounds of spoken language work together to make words. Before children learn to read print, they need to become aware of how sounds in spoken words work (Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement, 2001).

Several studies have shown that a child's level of phonemic awareness is the strongest predictor of his or her success in learning to read (Share et. Al., 1984; Perfetti, Beck, Bell and Hughes, 1987; Adams, and Bruck, 1995; National Reading Panel, 2000). Lyon and Alexander (1996/97) found that children in late kindergarten or first grade who experience phonemic awareness deficits have difficulty learning to read.

In the National Reading Panel analysis, studies that spent between 5 and 18 hours teaching PA yielded very large effect size. These findings suggest that phonemic awareness instruction does not have to be lengthy to exert its strongest effect on spelling and reading (*National Reading Panel Report, 2001*). CIERA also stated, "Phonemic awareness instruction makes a stronger contribution to the improvement of reading and writing when children are taught letters as they manipulate phonemes than when instruction is limited to phonemes alone."

Phonemic awareness instruction improves children's ability to read words. The most effective methods for teaching phonemic awareness have shown that children receiving specific training in both segmenting and blending phonemes learned new words at a significantly faster rate than those who were taught blending skills only (Torgesen, Morgan, and Davies, 1992; O'Connor, Jenkins, and Slocum, 1995). It also improves reading comprehension. Phonemic awareness instruction aids reading comprehension primarily through its influence on word reading (*Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement, 2001*). In writing, spelling words as they sound enhances phonemic awareness and letter knowledge and accelerates the acquisition of conventional spelling (*National Research Council, 1998*).

- 2. Phonics**—The understanding that there is a predictable relationship between phonemes – the sounds of spoken language – and graphemes – the letters and spellings that represent those sounds in written language. Readers use these relationships to recognize familiar words accurately and automatically and to decode unfamiliar words.

Phonics and word study (decoding strategies) involve the systematic instruction of letter-sound relations to read and spell words accurately and quickly (Learning First Alliance, 2000; National Reading Panel, 2001). “The primary focus of phonics instruction is to help beginning readers understand how letters are linked to sounds (phonemes) to form letter-sound correspondences and spelling patterns and to help them learn how to apply this knowledge in their reading” (National Reading Panel, 2001).

Researchers agree, systematic and explicit phonics instruction is more effective than non-systematic or no phonics instruction (National Reading Panel, 2000). Explicit, systematic phonics instruction

- benefits all beginning readers and most particularly children having difficulty learning to read;
- can be delivered through tutoring, small group, and whole group instruction, especially in kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade and to help in preventing reading difficulties among at-risk students;
- is integrated with other reading instruction to create a complete reading program (National Reading Panel, 2000).

“Proficient readers recognize the vast majority of words in texts quickly, allowing them to focus on the meaning of the text. Since approximately 300 words account for 65% of the words in texts, rapid recognition of these words during the primary grades forms the foundation for fluent reading” (Hiebert, Pearson, Taylor, Richardson, & Paris, 1998). Many researchers found that early readers need to have opportunities to apply their phonics to decode words, hence some advocate the use of highly decodable texts for beginning reading (Juel and Roper/Schneider, 1985). However, exclusive use of highly decodable text has been rebutted by many in the field.

The hallmark of programs of systematic phonics instruction is the direct teaching of a set of letter-sound relationships in a clearly defined sequence. The set includes the major sound/spelling relationships of both consonants and vowels (*Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement*, p. 13). The distinctions between approaches [to phonics instruction] are not absolute, and some programs of instruction combine approaches (*Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement*, p. 13).

Students need to learn how to remember and reproduce exact letter patterns (e.g., letter-sound correspondences, spelling patterns, syllables, and meaningful word parts). (*Learning First Alliance, 2000; National Reading Panel, 2000; National Research Council, 1998*). In implementing systematic phonics instruction, educators must keep the *end* in mind and ensure that children understand the purpose of learning letter sounds and that they are able to apply these skills in their daily reading and writing activities (*National Reading Panel Summary Report*, p. 10).

Because systematic phonics instruction helps children learn to identify words, it increases their ability to comprehend what they read (*Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement, 2001*).

Complementing regular opportunities for writing with systematic spelling instruction enhances and extends to both reading and writing growth (*Adams, 2001*).

**3. Vocabulary development**—Development of stored information about the meanings and pronunciation of words necessary for communication. There are four types of vocabulary:

- Listening vocabulary – the words needed to understand what is heard
- Speaking vocabulary – the words used when speaking
- Reading vocabulary – the words needed to understand what is read
- Writing vocabulary – the words used in writing

Knowledge of word meaning (vocabulary) is essential for improving reading comprehension (Learning First Alliance; National Reading Panel, 2000; Beck, Perfetti, and McKeown, 1982; McKeown, Beck, Omanson, and Perfetti, 1983; Carney, Anderson, Blackburn, and Blessings, 1984; Kame'enui, Carnine, and Freschi, 1982). Research shows that most vocabulary is learned indirectly, through speech, but that some must be taught directly (National Institute for Literacy, 2001). Beck and McKeown (1991) found that words are typically learned from repeated encounters, rather than a single context or encounter.

“Teachers should help children actively explore the meaning of new words and concepts” (Learning First Alliance, 1998). “Students learn vocabulary directly when they are explicitly taught both individual words and word-learning strategies. Direct vocabulary instruction aids reading comprehension.” (Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement, p. 35). Vocabulary is a vital aid to comprehension and as illustrated in the following quotes its importance cannot be overlooked.

- “Knowledge of word meanings is critical to reading comprehension.” (*Learning First Alliance, 2000*)
- “Direct instruction of vocabulary relevant to a given text leads to better reading comprehension.” (*Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement*)
- “Knowledge of words supports comprehension, and wide reading enables the acquisition of word knowledge.” (*Learning First Alliance, 2000*)
- “Word-conscious students know many words and use them well. They enjoy words and are eager to learn new words—and they know *how* to learn them.” (*Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement, 2001, p. 44*)

**4. Reading fluency, including oral reading skills** – Fluency is the ability to read text accurately and quickly. It provides a bridge between word recognition and comprehension. Fluent readers recognize words and comprehend at the same time.

According to the Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement, 2001, p. 22, “Fluency is the ability to read a text accurately and quickly.” Students in order to comprehend texts need to read with fluency and expression. Studies have found that comprehension depends strongly on fluency and conclude that fluency skills should be regularly assessed and taught in the classroom (Snow, Burns, and Griffin, 1998). The connections between fluency, vocabulary and comprehension are well recognized in the literature and co relational studies suggest that the more children read, the better their fluency, vocabulary and comprehension.” (*National Reading Panel Summary Booklet, p. 12*)

In order to support fluency development, one strategy recognized in the literature is repeated oral reading with feedback and guidance. “Repeated reading procedures that offer guidance and feedback are effective for improving word recognition, fluency, comprehension, and overall reading achievement through grade 5.” (National Reading Panel 2000) The Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement, 2001 advises that, “Fluency develops as a result of many opportunities to practice reading with a high degree of success. Therefore, your students should practice orally rereading text that is

reasonably easy for them—that is, text containing mostly words they know or can decode easily...texts should be at the students' independent reading level (95% accuracy). ...There are several ways that your students can practice orally reading text, including student-adult reading, choral (or unison) reading, tape-assisted reading, partner reading, and reader's theater." (p. 26, p. 27)

The Learning First Alliance, 2000; National Reading Panel, 2000; National Institute for Literacy, 2001; National Research Council, 1998, make the point that instructional time spent on independent, silent reading with minimal guidance or feedback has NOT been confirmed by research to improve reading fluency and overall reading achievement. However, access to books and print materials has been shown by correlational studies to be an important part of a literacy program (Neuman & Celano, 2001).

**5. Reading comprehension strategies** – Strategies for understanding, remembering, and communicating with others about what has been read. Comprehension strategies are sets of steps that purposeful, active readers use to make sense of text.

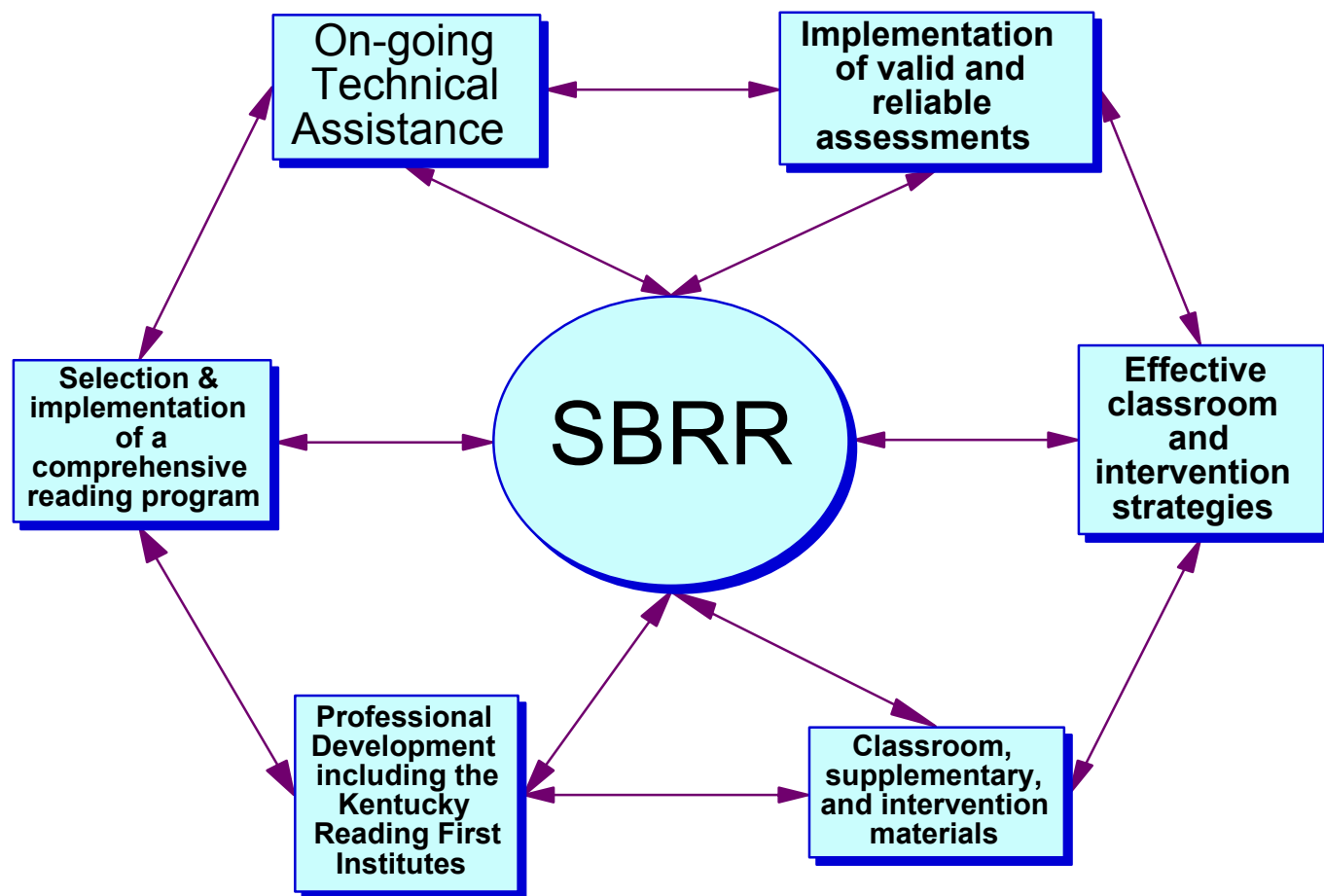
Comprehension is the reason for reading. "Text comprehension is the process that enables readers to make meaning of texts and to communicate meaning about what was read" (National Reading Panel, 2000). "Comprehension strategy instruction helps students become purposeful, active readers who are in control of their own reading comprehension" (Put Reading First: The research building blocks for teaching children to read – kindergarten through grade 3, 2001).

The scientifically based reading research strongly supports the need for comprehension strategies to be explicitly modeled and demonstrated for students. The research recommends a range of diverse strategies for strengthening students' abilities to comprehend texts, such as

- explicit phonics instruction improves word reading skills and text comprehension, especially for kindergarteners, first graders, and older struggling readers. (*National Reading Panel, 2000*)
- explicit word recognition instruction integrated with rapid processing of words, spelling skills, and strategies to improve comprehension. (*Fletcher and Lyon, 1998*)
- instruction of cognitive strategies improves reading comprehension in readers with a range of abilities...This improvement occurs when teachers demonstrate, explain, model, and implement interaction with students in teaching them how to comprehend a text. (*National Reading Panel, 2000, p. 4-47*)
- explicit instruction on strategies, such as summarizing the main idea, predicting events or information to which the text is leading, drawing inferences, and monitoring for misunderstandings, that are used to comprehend text (either to read to the students or that students read themselves). (*National Research Council, 1998, p. 195*)
- comprehension monitoring, collaborative learning, graphic and semantic organizers including story maps, question answering, question generation, and summarization. (*National Reading Panel, 2000*)
- researchers note that teaching teachers how to implement comprehension strategies correctly and more frequently is an important issue in improving the overall reading ability of their students. (Duffy, 1993)

This description, with the support of additional resources supporting scientifically based reading research, will be connected to all state and local level Reading First activities designed to improve primary (K-3) reading instruction. The following graphic provides a visual of how these components of scientifically based reading research will serve as the hub for the numerous activities - identified in the spokes on the wheel – implemented as a part of Reading First in Kentucky.





### Summary

These components of scientifically based reading research are included in the state-mandated Kentucky *Program of Studies* and form the core of the professional development that support teachers in their preparation as effective advocates of best reading practices. The five essential components for effective reading instruction will drive the instructional and curriculum decisions made in Kentucky. The components are critical in how teachers program and plan for instruction as well as how the professional development at the state, district, and school level will be developed and implemented. Schools applying for Reading First funding will be responsible for demonstrating how the components are met in their comprehensive reading programs.

### **1.C. State Definitions of Subgrant Eligibility**

Applicant eligibility for Kentucky Reading First grants is tied to basic local educational agency (LEA) eligibility for sub grants under the Reading First State Grants Program. To meet the basic eligibility criteria under the Kentucky Reading First Grants Program, **each eligible school district (LEA) must:**

- be among the LEAs in the state with the highest number or percentages of students in the primary program (K through grade 3) who are reading below grade level, based on the most currently available data (and a state may use the lowest grade for which it has those data, such as grade 4, up through grade 5); **specifically for Kentucky, LEAs meeting this criterion are those that have one**

**or more schools with greater than 50% below proficient in 4th grade reading based on the Kentucky Core Content Test;**

**AND ALSO FALLS WITHIN ONE OF THE FOLLOWING ALTERNATIVE CATEGORIES:**

- LEA has jurisdiction over a geographic area that includes an area designated as an empowerment zone (EZ) or an enterprise community (EC);

**OR**

- LEA has jurisdiction over a significant number or percentage of schools that are identified for school improvement under section 1116(b) of Title I of the ESEA;

**OR**

- LEA has the highest numbers or percentages of children in the state who are counted by the USDOE under section 1124(c) of Title I of the ESEA.

The above criterion establishes 90 LEAs in Kentucky who are eligible to apply. The list ensures geographic diversity of eligible LEAs across the state that includes both rural and urban areas. Using the reading achievement associated with the Commonwealth Accountability and Testing System (CATS) ensures that the applicant pool is sufficiently targeted, yet broad enough to ensure that only applications of highest quality are funded.

The eligible Kentucky local education agencies are:

Adair County, Allen County, Ashland Independent, Augusta Independent, Barbourville Independent, Bardstown Independent, Bath County, Bell County, Bourbon County, Bowling Green Independent, Boyle County, Breathitt County, Breckinridge County, Bullitt County, Caldwell County, Casey County, Carter County, Christian County, Clark County, Clay County, Clinton county, Covington Independent, Danville Independent, Dawson's Springs Independent, Dayton Independent, Eminence Independent, Fayette County, Fleming County, Floyd County, Fulton County, Garrard County, Graves County, Green County, Greenup County, Hardin County, Harlan County, Harrison County, Harrodsburg Independent, Hart County, Henderson County, Henry County, Hickman County, Hopkins County, Jackson County, Jefferson County, Jenkins Independent, Jessamine County, Knott County, Knox County, Larue County, Laurel County, Lawrence County, Lee County, Leslie County, Letcher County, Lewis County, Lincoln County, Livingston County, Logan County, Madison County, Magoffin County, Marion County, Martin County, Mayfield County, McCreary County, Montgomery County, Monticello Independent, Morgan County, Muhlenberg County, Nelson County, Newport Independent, Nicholas County, Ohio County, Owen County, Owsley County, Paducah Independent, Pendleton County, Perry County, Pike County, Providence Independent, Pulaski County, Robertson County, Russell County, Russellville Independent, Scott County, Taylor County, Union County, Warren County, West Point Independent, and Whitley County.

LEAs having 3 or fewer schools serving primary children will be able to apply for Kentucky Reading First through the services of a regional educational cooperative to better serve their needs, although the LEA must serve as the fiscal agent. In a Letter of Intent (see D.1 below), LEAs and cooperatives will be required to describe how they will work together to ensure implementation of grant and monitoring of student progress.

**1.D. Selection Criteria for Awarding Subgrants**

Kentucky's Reading First "Request for Proposals" for eligible LEAs will clearly define the subgrant selection criteria, including

- How selected LEAs will identify schools to be served
- How LEAs will assist schools in selecting and implementing appropriate Kentucky Reading First programs
- How LEAs will assist schools in selecting appropriate Kentucky Reading First instructional materials, including supplemental and intervention programs and materials
- Commitment of LEAs to ensure implementation and change in practice in each Reading First school
- Commitment of selected LEAs to the development of instructional leadership within the Kentucky Reading First infrastructure
- Commitment of selected LEAs to high quality professional development that meets Kentucky Professional Development Standards
- How selected LEAs will provide high quality technical assistance to participating Kentucky Reading First schools
- Commitment of LEAs to monitoring implementation and student progress in Kentucky Reading First schools
- How selected LEAs and schools will promote reading and library programs to provide students with engaging reading materials
- How selected LEAs will include the additional criteria of integrating reading and writing and involving families in literacy development

All local educational agency subgrants will include the following non-negotiables:

- A reading coach at the school level who participates in ongoing state level professional development provided by the KDE Reading Coaches
- A reading component included in the comprehensive school improvement plan
- A School Reading/Literacy Team (made up of an administrator, school reading coach, grade level representatives, and a special education representative preferably a speech language pathologist) that will assist in the implementation of Reading First at the school level
- A minimum of 90 minutes of instruction time each day devoted to the five components of reading instruction and writing
- Ongoing assessment and intervention
- Alignment with components with the Kentucky Program of Studies
- A match of an assigned District Reading Coach who will participate in ongoing state level professional development and continued involvement at the school level
- District professional development, provided by the KDE Reading Coaches and the District/School reading coaches, for administrators and instructional leaders
- Participation in statewide evaluation and any federal level evaluation, as requested
- Participation in a program that provides children and families with access to quality literature

**D. 1—Schools to be served**

Eligible LEAs are described in Section C above. Selected LEAs must decide which schools in their jurisdiction will participate in Kentucky Reading First. Schools invited to participate in initial funding must meet the following criteria:

- Be among the schools in the LEA with highest poverty students in the district

- Have 50% or more students below “Proficient” on the 4<sup>th</sup> grade Kentucky CATS assessment
- Be in Title I improvement

LEAs will be required to describe how they will select schools to participate in Kentucky Reading First. Schools participating in a school-wide literacy initiative currently funded through Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration (CSRD) grant funds will not be eligible for initial Kentucky Reading First funding.

Schools targeted for eligibility for Kentucky Reading First will be required to write a Letter of Intent to the LEA. The Letter of Intent must describe how the school meets the following criteria:

- Demonstrate a need for Kentucky Reading First funds
- Agree to complete the school RFP and assist in developing the district Reading First application
- Identify a school level Reading First coach to participate and lead RF activities
- Gain the commitment of primary teachers and administrators to participate in all Reading First activities
- Identify the process for establishing a school reading team
- Ensure commitment to continuously measure reading progress according to the Reading First Assessment schedule
- Provide appropriate intervention for struggling readers
- Collaborate with the School and District Reading First coaches and the Evaluation Team to analyze, evaluate, and use data to inform instruction/intervention
- Provide a plan for involving parents in the Reading First project, especially parents of children who are below grade level and who may themselves be low-level or non-readers.
- Obtain written approval of their school-based decision making councils to participate in Kentucky Reading First.

#### **D. 2—Instructional Assessments**

The Kentucky Board of Education regulation requires continuous assessment for all primary students enrolled in Kentucky’s mandatory ungraded primary program (704 KAR 3:440). Kentucky Reading First classrooms will use assessments that screen, diagnose, and monitor ongoing reading progress. These assessments will be used to support learning and inform instruction in the essential components of scientifically based reading instruction: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, fluency, and comprehension. To eliminate early reading difficulties, early diagnosis and intervention must be a priority.

#### ***KDE: Selection of Assessments***

Kentucky’s Reading First Plan requires the common use of screening, diagnostic, progress monitoring, and outcome instruments. Screening and diagnosis will be conducted at the beginning of the year. For new students, diagnostic testing will occur in the first week of their enrollment. Progress is to be monitored during the year and outcome measures will take place at the end of the year. The following assessments shall be used:

#### **1. Group Reading Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation (GRADE)**

The GRADE (Group Reading Assessment and Diagnostic Assessment), published by American Guidance Services, will be used in its entirety as a screening/diagnostic and outcome assessment measure. Normative data from 1999-2000 are based on over 3400 students from 122 sites across the nation. A

variety of derived scores are available, including stanines, percentile rank scores, grade equivalents, standard scores, and normal curve equivalents. The publisher provides data on internal consistency reliability (.95 to .99), alternate forms reliability (median of .89), and test-retest reliability (median of .90). Considerable evidence of criterion-related and construct validity is available in the technical documentation. See <http://www.agsnet.com> for an overview. The Reading First legislation was the guiding framework in test design. The subtests at levels K-3 reflect the instructional domains advocated by the National Reading Panel (2000) and embedded in the Reading First guidelines. The GRADE will address the following components and subtests:

**GRADE – Tested in Sept (Diagnostic), May (Outcomes)**

<b>Component</b>	<b>Subtest</b>	<b>K</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
Reading	Sound Matching	X			
Readiness					
Phonemic awareness	Rhyming	X			
Phonics	Print Awareness	X			
	Letter Recognition	X			
	Same & Different Words	X			
	Phoneme-Grapheme Correspondence	X			
Vocabulary	Word Reading	X	X	X	X
	Word Meaning		X	X	
	Vocabulary				X
Comprehension	Sentence Comprehension		X	X	X
	Passage Comprehension		X	X	X
Oral Language	Listening Comprehension	X	X	X	X

The selection of GRADE is compatible with Kentucky's Primary Program as it may be administered to individuals, small groups, or to an entire class.

**2. Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS)** will serve as a screening, progress monitoring, outcome assessment. It will serve as a tool for assessing phonemic awareness, phonics, and fluency. DIBELS is a short one minute assessment that will provide information on a student's early literacy development. DIBELS will be administered three times a year as outlined in the assessment schedule below.

Kindergarten DIBELS		Assessment Schedule	
<i>Big Idea Assessed</i>	Beginning-of-Year (Sept)	Mid-Year (Dec/Feb)	End-of-Year (May)
Phonological Awareness	Initial Sounds Fluency (ISF)	Initial Sounds Fluency (ISF)	
Phonological Awareness		Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF)	Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF)
Alphabetic Principle		Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF)	Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF)

First Grade DIBELS		Assessment Schedule	
<i>Big Idea Assessed</i>	Beginning-of-Year (Sept)	Mid-Year (Dec/Feb)	End-of-Year (May)
Phonological Awareness	Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF)	Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF)	Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF)
Alphabetic Principle	Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF)	Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF)	Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF)
Fluency with Connected Text		Oral Reading Fluency (ORF)	Oral Reading Fluency (ORF)

Second and Third Grade DIBELS		Assessment Schedule	
<i>Big Idea Assessed</i>	Beginning-of-Year (Sept)	Mid-Year (Dec/Feb)	End-of-Year (May)
Fluency with Connected Text	Oral Reading Fluency (ORF)	Oral Reading Fluency (ORF)	Oral Reading Fluency (ORF)

**3. Terra Nova-** will be used as a summative evaluation of Reading First school programs at the end of the primary years (grade 3). The Terra Nova assesses phonemic awareness, phonics and other word recognition strategies, vocabulary, and comprehension. This summative data will provide uniform information on student achievement across all student populations in Reading First schools.

All primary (K-3) teachers in Reading First schools will receive professional development and technical assistance in administering these assessments for screening, diagnosing, and monitoring student progress. The KDE Reading Coaches will provide technical assistance in interpreting and analyzing assessment data to all District and School Reading Coaches. School Reading Coaches will be required to provide

similar training for all Reading First classroom teachers and assist teachers in making changes and adjusting instructional decisions according to the test results.

### Kentucky's Assessment Framework

		<b>Screening/ Diagnostics Sept.</b>	<b>Progress Monitoring Dec/Feb</b>	<b>Outcomes May</b>
<b>P1 (K)</b>				
	Phonemic Awareness Phonics	DIBELS DIBELS/GRADE	DIBELS DIBELS	DIBELS DIBELS/ GRADE DIBELS
	Vocabulary Development	DIBELS/GRADE	DIBELS	
	Reading Fluency Comprehension	NA		
	Listening Reading	GRADE NA		GRADE
<b>P2 (G.1)</b>				
	Phonemic Awareness Phonics	DIBELS DIBELS	DIBELS DIBELS	DIBELS DIBELS
	Vocabulary Development	DIBELS/GRADE		
	Reading Fluency Comprehension	DIBELS		DIBELS
	Listening Reading	GRADE GRADE		GRADE GRADE
<b>P3 (G. 2)</b>				
	Phonemic Awareness Phonics	DIBELS DIBELS	DIBELS DIBELS DIBELS	DIBELS DIBELS DIBELS
	Vocabulary Development	DIBELS/GRADE		
	Reading Fluency Comprehension	DIBELS	DIBELS	DIBELS
	Listening Reading	GRADE GRADE		GRADE GRADE
<b>P4 (G.3)</b>				
	Phonemic Awareness Phonics	DIBELS DIBELS	DIBELS DIBELS	DIBELS DIBELS/ Terra NOVA
	Vocabulary Development	DIBELS/GRADE	DIBELS	DIBELS/ Terra NOVA
	Reading Fluency Comprehension	DIBELS	DIBELS	DIBELS
	Listening Reading	GRADE GRADE		GRADE GRADE

Each LEA will be required to adopt the assessment framework outlined above. The comprehensive reading assessment framework includes:

- the KDE identified assessments (GRADE, DIBELS, and Terra Nova)
- a detailed timeline for assessing primary students (K-3) outlining when assessments will occur.

In addition to this framework, LEAs are responsible for outlining procedures for implementing intensive assistance reading plans for students reading below grade level. A description of the intervention services, including tutorial assistance, must be outlined as a part of this plan. The intensive assistance reading plan will be designed specifically for students not meeting state language arts literacy benchmarks, and the K-3 reading accomplishments of Reading First. These plans will require Reading First school to document how instruction will be individualized to meet the needs of all struggling readers including limited English proficient students and students who may be at risk for being inappropriately referred to special education.

Statewide professional development and technical assistance will be provided to ensure effective administration and implementation of the assessments. Specific phases are outlined in the State Professional Development Plan (See 1F).

This will ensure that the Kentucky Reading First LEAs and schools will use consistent, valid, and reliable measures to screen, diagnosis, and monitor students reading progress in all five components of effective reading instruction. As an end result, students will receive appropriate instruction leading to reading success.

#### **D. 3—Instructional Strategies and Programs**

Eligible LEAs and schools must select a comprehensive reading program or combination of programs that includes supplementary and intervention programs in order to ensure that all students are reading at or above grade level by the end of primary (third grade). A comprehensive reading program must provide:

- evidence of scientifically based reading research.
- instructional strategies in reading that will enable students to be proficient readers.
- instructional programs and aligned materials that include explicit and systematic instruction in the five essential components of effective reading instruction (phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, fluency, and comprehension).
- a clear plan for monitoring student progress, including an intensive assistance reading plan for those reading below grade level.
- a supplementary and intervention program that is connected to the core reading program.
- professional development aligned to the reading program.

The reading program evaluation tool to be used by LEAs when applying for Reading First will be *The Kentucky Program Evaluation Tool* (based on the Massachusetts Department of Education tool and used by permission)- *Appendix A*. Each LEA will be required to submit a completed copy of the Kentucky Reading Program Evaluation Tool for each school. The process for evaluating LEAs choice of a comprehensive reading program(s) is:

- 1) LEAs submit the Kentucky Program Evaluation Tool in conjunction with the RFP
- 2) KDE establishes an expert review panel consisting of individuals highly knowledgeable in scientifically- based reading research – The members of this panel will have advanced degrees and demonstrate knowledge in scientifically based reading research and the importance of explicit, systematic instructional strategies and phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary development, and comprehension
- 3) Expert panel convenes and applies the scoring guide for the Kentucky Reading Program Evaluation Tool



- 4) Applications must meet criteria in every area in order to qualify for funding consideration  
 5) Expert panel identifies LEAs that meet program criteria for SBRR

Scoring Guide for The Kentucky Reading Program Evaluation Tool	
Meets Criteria	Does Not Meet Criteria
<p>The program has been carefully reviewed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kentucky Evaluation Tool has been completed and submitted.</li> <li>School level assurances are included and identify the persons responsible for reviewing the proposed program.</li> <li>The program contains the instructional elements and characteristics defined as scientifically based.</li> <li>Evidence of research base is current, clear, concise, and accurate.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">*(I,II)</p>	<p>The program has not been carefully reviewed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kentucky Evaluation Tool has not been completed and submitted.</li> <li>School level assurances are not included identifying the individuals responsible for reviewing the proposed program.</li> <li>There is little or no evidence that the program contains the instructional elements and characteristics defined as scientifically based.</li> <li>Evidence provided is dated, inaccurate, or unclear.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">* (I,II)</p>
<p>The five components of reading instruction are fully addressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is direct, systematic instruction in all five elements of reading.</li> <li>Clear focus on phonemic awareness, phonics instruction, comprehension skills and strategies, vocabulary and concept development, fluency, spelling, and writing.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">*(III)</p>	<p>The five components of reading instruction are not fully addressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is little or no support for direct, systematic instruction in all five elements of reading.</li> <li>One or more of the essential components are not included in the program.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">*(III)</p>
<p>The program is based on sound principles of instructional design.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher directions are clear.</li> <li>The intended purpose of the materials is clear.</li> <li>All materials are clearly aligned with the purposes of Reading First.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">*(V)</p>	<p>The program is not based on sound principles of instructional design.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher directions are vague.</li> <li>The intended purpose is not stated and not aligned with the purposes of Reading First.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">*(V)</p>
<p>The program is valid and reliable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is clear evidence that the program has been effective at the grade levels served.</li> <li>There is clear evidence that the program has been used successfully with similar demographic and learner profiles.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">*(I)</p>	<p>The program is not valid and reliable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is no evidence at the specified grade levels or with students from similar backgrounds.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">*(I)</p>
<p>The program employs a coherent instructional design.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Includes explicit instructional strategies.</li> <li>Includes coordinated instructional sequences.</li> <li>Provides ample practice opportunities.</li> <li>Contains aligned student materials.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">*(IV, V)</p>	<p>The program does not employ a coherent instructional design.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not include explicit instructional strategies.</li> <li>Does not include coordinated instructional sequences.</li> <li>Does not provide ample practice opportunities.</li> <li>Does not have aligned student materials.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">*(IV, V)</p>
<p>Content is organized around big ideas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Program includes critical concepts and is aligned to SBRR and the KY Program of Studies.</li> <li>Instruction is focused and comprehensive.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">*(III,V)</p>	<p>Content is not organized around big ideas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extensive, yet unconnected topics are included and do not align to SBRR and the KY Program of Studies.</li> <li>Lack of focus on what is being taught.</li> <li>Content tends to be trivial or superficial.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">*(III,V)</p>
<p>Materials contain explicit strategies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content is well organized.</li> <li>Instruction promotes generalization of concepts and skills.</li> <li>Prerequisite knowledge is provided through the use of explicit strategies.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">*(IV,VI)</p>	<p>Materials do not contain explicit strategies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content is unorganized and difficult to follow.</li> <li>Skills and knowledge are limited and related to one context.</li> <li>Strategies do not provide adequate prerequisite knowledge.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">*(IV,VI)</p>
<p>Materials provide opportunities for teachers to scaffold instruction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The instructional sequence provides maximum support in the early stages while encouraging independence.</li> <li>Appropriate assessment and monitoring strategies are used to gauge student progress.</li> <li>The steps in instruction are clear and move students toward proficiency.</li> <li>Supplemental materials support both early acquisition and independent application.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">*(V,VI)</p>	<p>Materials provide opportunities for teachers to scaffold instruction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is weak support for both early and independent learning.</li> <li>Provides support for early learning but not independent learning.</li> <li>Assessments are poorly designed, unclear, or not included.</li> <li>Steps to proficiency are unclear.</li> <li>There are no supplemental materials and they are of poor quality.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">*(V,VI)</p>
Skills and concepts are intentionally and	Skills and concepts are not intentionally and

<p><b>strategically integrated.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The design follows a sequence that includes prerequisite knowledge, explicit strategies that integrate knowledge and skills, and provides opportunities for automatic use.</li> <li>• Prerequisite knowledge is easily integrated into appropriate context.</li> <li>• Learning strategies increase automatically.</li> <li>• Strategies are cohesive and comprehensive. *(V,VI)</li> </ul>	<p><b>strategically integrated.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The design does not follow a sequence that includes prerequisite knowledge, explicit strategies that integrate knowledge and skills, and provides opportunities for automatic use.</li> <li>• Prerequisite knowledge is not integrated into appropriate context.</li> <li>• Learning strategies do not increase automatically. *(V,VI)</li> </ul>
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*(based on the criteria outlined in the New Jersey Reading First Plan and used by permission)*

\* Roman numerals correspond to the sections identified on the KY Program Evaluation Tool.

This evaluation process ensures that Reading First funding is awarded to LEAs implementing comprehensive and scientifically based reading programs. LEAs must avoid choosing programs that are layered on top of non-researched based programs that are already in place. LEAs must also show evidence that reading programs will be used as core reading programs and not added on to supplement existing deficit programs.

#### LEAs complete the RFP and include

- Kentucky Reading Evaluation Tool
- Assurances - SBDM council members, individuals responsible for the review and initial selection of the comprehensive reading program,
- Detailed description of how the program will be implemented, supported by professional development, and monitored by the school level administrator and school reading coach.

#### **D. 4—Instructional Materials**

LEAs must provide scientifically valid evidence that the materials purchased through their Reading First grant are effective at the levels being served. They must also provide evidence that materials have been carefully reviewed and that instructional content and methods are consistent with scientifically based reading research.

LEA plans must include documentation of how the instructional materials will

- clearly address the five components of effective reading instruction.
- support explicit instructional strategies.
- align with the comprehensive reading program.
- reflect the appropriate intervention for struggling readers, including special education students.
- provide ample opportunities for practice.
- be used and for what intended purpose.

LEAs must carefully evaluate, select, implement supplemental and intervention materials that compliment the comprehensive reading program to ensure the learning needs of all students are addressed. The Kentucky Program Evaluation Tool will enable the LEAs to determine areas for which supplemental materials are needed. This tool provides an objective and in-depth analysis of the reading program and materials according to the five essential components of reading research.

The KDE process for evaluating LEAs' choice of instructional and supplemental material(s) is consistent and parallel to the process for evaluating LEAs' choice of a comprehensive reading program:

1. LEAs submit the Kentucky Program Evaluation Tool in conjunction with the RFP
2. KDE establishes an expert review panel consisting of individuals highly knowledgeable in scientifically- based reading research – The members of this panel will have advanced degrees and demonstrate knowledge in scientifically based reading research and the importance of explicit,

systematic instructional strategies and phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary development, and comprehension

3. Expert panel convenes and applies the scoring guide for the Kentucky Reading Program Evaluation Tool
4. Applications must meet criteria in every area in order to qualify for funding consideration
5. Expert panel identifies LEAs that meet program criteria for SBRR

These criteria will ensure that Reading First recipients have adequately chosen instructional materials aligned to scientifically based reading research.

#### **D. 5—Instructional Leadership**

Success of any program is highly dependent on the leadership identified to support and implement the program. Eligible LEAs will identify a district administrator to serve as the District Reading coach (matching funds to the grant) who will devote time to the implementation of Kentucky Reading First. The KY Commissioner of Education has stated that KDE instructional leaders and district leaders must work closely together to achieve a common goal of student proficiency by 2014. Hence, the identified District Reading Coaches will receive intensive professional development, assistance and support from the KDE Reading First Staff.

##### ***District Leadership***

###### **District Reading First Coaches**

Eligible LEAs must identify a District Reading Coach. The District Reading First Coach will

- participate in intensive Kentucky Reading First training in April, May and July for sixteen days, a regional meeting each month from September – May, and an annual statewide meeting in the spring of the year.
- implement the Kentucky Reading First program.
- align reading curriculum to state standards.
- evaluate, monitor, analyze LEA and school reading progress in collaboration with the Evaluation Team.
- support mandatory district professional development for teachers, administrators, and building leaders through a Kentucky Reading First Institute and various other professional development options.
- work alongside Kentucky Reading First teachers and administrators no less than one day per week per school.

##### ***School Leadership***

###### **School Reading Coach**

Each Kentucky Reading First school will name a full-time **School Reading First Coach** (paid with grant funds) who will

- participate in all school-level Kentucky Reading First professional development activities.
- attend monthly School Based Decision Making Council meetings to provide Kentucky Reading First updates to the decision making body.
- work collaboratively with the school administrator in data collection for program evaluation.
- collaborate with the School Reading/Literacy Team and the appropriate staff to develop intensive assistance reading plans for struggling students and to coordinate resources for these students.
- facilitate ongoing, job-embedded professional development.
- support a school environment that encourages and supports change.

The School Reading Coach will serve as the reading leader in the building. This person should demonstrate a high level of expertise in reading and working with adults to facilitate professional development opportunities.

#### School Administrators

School administrators will serve as a crucial piece of the success of program implementation. School administrators will have numerous opportunities to participate in school-level, district, and regional level professional development opportunities. Participation in professional development opportunities is mandatory so that the school administrator has the expertise required to serve as an instructional leader in reading. School administrators will

- monitor, evaluate, and analyze student progress in an ongoing fashion to determine program effectiveness.
- participate in all school and district level Kentucky Reading First professional development (minimum of 20 hours).
- actively participate in the Kentucky Leadership Academy and other State referenced professional development targeting school administrators.
- create a school environment that encourages and supports change.
- communicate with the District Reading Coach/Contact and Evaluation Team.
- provide updates regularly to the local Board of Education.

#### School Reading/Literacy Teams

Each school level reading team will support the implementation of Reading First in the school. The School Reading Coach and an administrator are required to be active members of the School Reading/Literacy team. Any of following individuals may be considered for membership on the school reading team: one representative per age level represented in the primary program (grades K-3), the school media specialist (librarian), a special education representative, and a speech/language pathologist (if possible). The Reading Team will

- assist in the school level implementation of the Reading First program.
- participate in school level Kentucky Reading First professional development.
- create a school environment that encourages and supports change.
- collaborate with appropriate staff to develop intensive assistance reading plans for struggling students and coordinate resources for these students.
- assist in monitoring, evaluating, and analyzing of the school level reading progress in collaboration with the state Evaluation Team.
- meet on a regular basis to discuss and plan for Reading First implementation.

#### Local council (SBDM)

Local council (SBDM) members will have opportunities to participate in on-site professional development opportunities that address the implementation of scientifically based reading research and instructional practices.

Eligible LEAs will need to provide evidence of continuity of this instructional leadership framework.

#### **D. 6—District and School Based Professional Development**

Challenging our teachers to ensure that every child is reading at or above grade level by the end of the primary grades (grade 3), through the use of scientifically based reading research and programs, means that professional development must be integral in changing and improving teacher knowledge and

practice. Research shows that for teachers to develop real expertise in reading instruction and assessment, they need at least 80 to 100 hours of professional development in study, collaboration, observation of master teachers, and research (Learning First alliance, 2000).

### **Designing a clear and focused professional development plan**

KDE will require eligible LEAs to submit a professional development plan. This plan must include an intense focus on scientifically based reading research that builds upon ongoing state professional development and technical assistance. Each plan will include:

#### **I. Non-negotiables**

Successful implementation and monitoring of the Kentucky Reading First Plan requires that LEAs and schools include the following non negotiables:

- appoint a District Reading First Coach or a Kentucky Reading First District contact who will devote time to the implementation of the Kentucky Reading First programs,
- identify a School-based Reading Coach in each Kentucky Reading First school,
- participate in District/school Kentucky Reading First professional development, and
- provide mandatory training for administrators and instructional leaders in the district.

#### **II. Required content**

District and school based professional development opportunities will need to be outlined for all K-3 teachers and K-12 special education teachers. District/school professional development opportunities must be consistent with the scientifically based reading research . The content will

- be directed at improving reading achievement and accelerating reading performance.
- address the five essential components for reading instruction (phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, fluency, and comprehension).
- be based on scientifically based instructional materials, programs and strategies.
- include valid and reliable reading assessments for screening, diagnosis, and classroom based monitoring.
- 

#### **III. Plan details**

All professional development plans must demonstrate a commitment to a six year process for the delivery of this intensive professional development to be evaluated twice a year. The LEAs must include

- assurances that the district and school level reading coaches will attend all KDE Reading First related professional development activities.
- time for school level reading coaches to attend specialized training in the content outlined above to guarantee a high level of expertise in SBRR.
- a professional development schedule which includes time in and out of the classroom for training.
- targeted professional development for teachers who need additional assistance with skills and strategies.
- evidence of ongoing support for teachers for time for study, practice, implementation, and evaluation.
- an annual process for orienting new teachers in scientifically based reading research and programs, a schedule and explanation of professional development opportunities targeting school-based administrators and instructional leaders.

The Expert Team will evaluate the LEAs plan based on how well the plan addresses the above components in a consistent and systematic fashion. As a part of the evaluation, the level of support, clarity, and commitment to successfully carry out Reading First professional development activities will

be considered.

As a part of the KDE continued support, every two years the LEAs will work collaboratively with the KDE Regional Coach and the state Evaluation Team to evaluate the previous professional development plan, assess where their teachers are currently, and plan for future professional development. This will ensure that needs, changes, and/or adjustments are made as required.

#### **D. 7—District Based Technical Assistance**

The LEA must describe in its application the district-level support that will be provided as technical assistance to ensure high quality implementation of Kentucky Reading First. This will include how the district plans to provide a district-level Kentucky Reading First Coach with matching district funds.

Districts will

- identify eligible school(s) according to the Reading First guidelines.
- assist schools to identify school-specific professional development needs.
- set goals and benchmarks for annual reporting.
- facilitate budgeting and other resources.
- assist the school as requested in selecting a SBRR program to be approved by the school council.
- provide instruction in the use of screening, diagnostic, and classroom-based instructional assessments.
- demonstrate commitment to improved reading achievement K-3.
- form reading leadership teams at both district and school level.
- coordinate with other federal, state, and local reading program/initiatives to provide assistance.
- facilitate quality professional development in the model for K-3 teachers and K-12 special education teachers in both Kentucky Reading First and non-Kentucky Reading First schools.
- monitor implementation of grant.
- monitor use of assessment tools and collaborate with the state Evaluation Team.
- provide technical assistance in the implementation of the statewide data system.
- explain professional development plans.
- provide a detailed description of how district/school will spend Kentucky Reading First monies.

This commitment is necessary to guarantee effective, high quality implementation of Reading First.

#### **D. 8—Evaluation Strategies**

As part of the application process, LEAs must indicate how they will assess the effectiveness of the program implementation as well as the extent to which the program outcomes have been met. The application must indicate how the information collected by LEAs will be used to plan for school improvement and inform ongoing professional development, curriculum decisions, and support at the school level.

LEAs will collect, analyze and compile data that addresses the following research questions:

- How have students benefited from Kentucky Reading First?
- Is there evidence that overall school achievement results in reading have changed as a result of Kentucky Reading First?
- How has the reading achievement of individual students changed as a result of being involved in Kentucky Reading First?

- What are the scientifically based reading research models or reading programs selected by schools and what is the effectiveness of these programs/models as measured by early literacy assessment instruments?
- How have Kentucky Reading First schools successfully narrowed the reading achievement results for subgroup populations – low income, major racial/ethnic groups, LEP, and special education K-3?
- Which schools have successfully increased the number of students reading at grade level or higher when the results are disaggregated by low-income, major racial/ethnic groups, English language learners, and special education?
- What factors have contributed to this change?
- What instructional materials and reading programs are implemented in these schools?
- What do the major stakeholders (administrators, teachers, parents, students) regard as being significant change factors in literacy practices in these schools?

LEA research plans should include the following components:

**1. Reading First Implementation at the school and LEA level**

LEAs will appoint a district reading coach who will collate information from schools participating in the district. In each school, a school reading coach will be appointed and will be responsible for monitoring the implementation of Reading First at the school level. Monthly meetings with the district coach will focus on monitoring progress. At this time, adjustments will be made, assistance will be given and strategies for improvement will be considered.

In order to monitor ongoing progress, LEAs and the Evaluation Team will collect information using the following methods:

- a) Interviews with administrators – state, district and local on a twice yearly basis
- b) Focus group meetings with district coaches and KDE reading coaches every three months
- c) Reflective journals maintained by school reading coach with documentation of weekly meetings
- d) Literacy Action Plan, programming and classroom evaluation monitored and documented by school reading coach
- e) Observations by school reading coach and district reading coach
- f) Review teacher reflective journals
- g) Teacher interviews
- h) Teacher efficacy survey
- i) Local schools participate in periodic surveys

**2. Reading Achievement gains of students K-3**

The following reliable and valid measures will be administered at the school level and provide invaluable data to the LEAs regarding student gains in reading. Statewide assessments identified below are non-negotiable components of Kentucky's Reading First.

- a) Reading achievement test – CATS and Terra Nova (CTBS)
- b) Progress monitoring/screening/outcomes – DIBELS
- c) Diagnostic/outcomes – Group Reading Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation (GRADE)
- d) Classroom-based screening – self selected informal and formal measures

The Kentucky assessment plan calls for LEAs to describe in their subgrant applications how they will assess vocabulary and comprehension in primary (Grades K-3).

This information will be collated and analyzed by the School and District Reading Coaches and reported to LEAs who will assess progress, assist with planning, and make professional development decisions. A description of these tests and the timeframe for administering them can be found in Section III, State Reporting and Evaluation, Section A.

### **3. Reading First Program effectiveness in reducing the numbers of students reading below grade level.**

School Reading Coaches will document the change process and report on a monthly basis to the LEAs. LEAs will complete two in-depth case studies of schools where there has been a significant improvement in the reading achievement results of students disaggregated by low income, major racial/ethnic groups, LEP, and special education.

Comparisons between schools participating in Reading First and those that are demographically similar and are not participating will be conducted by the LEAs should also be considered in the research plan.

At six monthly intervals, the above data and evaluations will be analyzed and reported to the State Reading Coaches. Where results indicate that intervention and/or discontinuation is warranted, a panel including (but not limited to) the School Reading Coach, District Reading Coach, KDE Reading Coach will meet to determine the appropriate course of action. Schools will be required to submit their results and supporting evidence if funding is to continue.

#### **D. 9—Access to Print Materials**

International comparisons show the strong effects of print access on reading achievement. Elley's (1994,1996) comparison of reading scores, home environments, and school and public library data from several countries demonstrated that **access to print was the most powerful correlate of reading achievement**. Controlling for differences in economic conditions among the participating countries, Elley (1996) found that the size of the school library was the number one factor distinguishing the reading scores of nine-year-olds between the high and low scoring nations, with an impressive effect size of .82. Supporting research by Krashen (1993, 1995) found a critical relationship between access to books in public and school libraries and reading achievement.

Currently, children in schools that are located in low-economic neighborhoods have about 50 percent fewer books in their schools than children going to schools located in higher economic communities (Guice et al.,1996). The schools located in these low-economic neighborhoods are the schools that serve children who are least likely to live in literate-home environments and least likely to have access to public library facilities (Allington and Cunningham,1996, 1999). These are the very schools and children that will be served by Kentucky Reading First.

The relationship of access to print to literacy acquisition for children at risk is paramount. A recent study by Neuman & Celano (2001) referenced the knowledge gap hypothesis, Tichenor, Donahue, and Olien (1970) as an underlying assumption that knowledge produces more knowledge, they hypothesized that - "haves" read more, engage more in higher level conversations, create greater existing pools of knowledge, and use information for fulfilling specific purposes and needs. Greater use enhances speed of information acquisition, which over time is likely to accelerate a knowledge gap between those who have access and those who do not.



The Kentucky Reading First proposal will require LEAs to participate in a structured program that enhances literacy development, strengthens literacy at home and puts books into the hands of children being served by Kentucky Reading First. LEAs selected for Reading First funding will

- form a partnership with the public library.
- use a portion of their Reading First funds or a school/district match to build classroom libraries that are inclusive of all genres that are outlined in the Kentucky Core Content for Reading Assessment (subdomains) for independent reading practice.
- involve Library/Media Specialists in all Reading First professional development activities.
- develop a plan to promote access to print during the summer.
- establish and provide a professional staff library in an accessible central location within the school.

#### **D. 10—Additional Criteria**

The following additional criteria will be included as a part of the evaluation of eligible LEAs.

**Writing Instruction:** Due to the strong emphasis on student writing in the Kentucky accountability system, and the research that supports the reading/writing connection, LEAs will be required to include a writing component in their application.

#### **Family Involvement in Literacy Development**

All Kentucky Reading First Schools are encouraged to include a family involvement component in their program to support children's reading gains. LEAs should include a plan for

- explaining the Kentucky Reading First approach to parents in the school.
- providing take-home activities to reinforce reading lessons in school.
- addressing potentially low literacy levels of the parents in both informational materials and take-home activities.
- referring parents to adult education or family literacy services (available in all Kentucky counties July 1, 2003).
- planning joint activities with adult or family literacy services in the community.
- participating in professional development and training provided by the Kentucky Institute for Family Literacy in order to align family literacy activities.
- collaborating with the Kentucky Institute for Family Literacy.

#### **D. 11—Competitive Priorities**

The competitive priorities that LEAs must demonstrate in order to be funded for Kentucky Reading First are that

- at least 15% of students served in the LEA are from families with incomes below the poverty line; or
- at least 6,500 children in the LEA are from families with incomes below the poverty line; and
- less than 50% of students in the participating schools scored at the Proficient level or above on the Kentucky Core Content Test in Reading, Grade 4.

#### **1.E. Process for Awarding Subgrants**

The Reading First Leadership Team will oversee the process of awarding subgrants. The Leadership Team will appoint an Expert Panel to review applications and make recommendations. A scoring guide will be developed to evaluate the RFP and will include the Scoring Guide: Kentucky Evaluation Tool for Programs and Materials.

### **Procedure for Notifying Eligible LEAs**

The KDE will use current communication networks to broadly publicize the eligibility requirements and the application requirements. The list will be posted on the KDE website, published in Leadership Letter (newsletter which goes to every Superintendent), and in the Kentucky Teacher (newsletter which goes to every teacher in Kentucky). Additionally, the Commissioner of Education has the capacity to directly e-mail every teacher and administrator in the state. The state will coordinate this with the timeline of our annual Early Reading Incentive Grant funding opportunities.

### **Selection Process**

In order to meet the state-mandated non-negotiables (see Section I) and have the resources necessary to successfully implement reading programs based on scientific research, it is anticipated that Kentucky will have approximately 70 schools participating in Kentucky Reading First beginning in FY03. It is anticipated that the average annual award to each school within an LEA's application will be \$170,000. The award to each LEA will not be less than the percent share of Title I Part A of the previous year. This varies greatly by district, from small independent districts such as Augusta (\$4,689) to the state's largest, Jefferson County, which serves the Louisville metropolitan area (\$1.5 million).

### **Timeline:**

June 2003	KDE will notify eligible districts through KET STAR Channel broadcast and other existing media and technology networks of the availability of funds to support reading programs.
June 2003	RFP and application package posted on KDE website. Begin technical assistance sessions.
July – Dec. 2003	KDE Regional training sessions for applicants regarding scientifically based reading research.
Nov. – Dec. 2003	Select and train grant reviewers in scientifically based reading research.
	KDE Regional technical assistance in preparing applications.
Nov. - Dec. 2003	Intent to Apply Deadline.
	Grant applications due.
	Applications scored by independent reviewers.
Jan. 2004	Reading First Leadership Team makes funding decisions Projects notified of funding. Processing of Memorandum of Agreement
Feb. 2004	Initiation of Project Activities

**Description of Review Process:****Reviewers**

An expert review panel will be appointed by the KDE Reading First Leadership Team to evaluate Reading First applications. The members of this panel will have advanced degrees and be knowledgeable in scientifically based reading research and the importance of explicit, systematic instructional strategies in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary development and comprehension. They will also have collective expertise in professional development, leadership, assessment, curriculum, and teacher education. Reviewers will work in three-member teams. Teams will review and score each application.

The expert panel will be asked to schedule three days for the review. Prior to the scheduled days, the expert panel members will receive for their review Reading First guidance materials including *Put Reading First*, a copy of the Reading First RFP and a copy of the Reviewers' Scoring Guide. The first day of the review will consist of a thorough overview of the requirements of the Reading First program, the importance of SBRR and the components of Kentucky's Reading First RFP. Training on the methods for scoring the grants using the Draft Scoring Guide for Evaluation of Programs and Materials (Section D.3) will comprise approximately one full day. Emphasis will be given to the Kentucky Evaluation Tool for Scientifically Based Reading Programs. The remaining days will be used to score the proposals. The expert panel will meet to work toward a consensus rating and total score.

Once the applications receive a score from the expert review panel, the Expert Panel will make recommendations for selection to KDE Reading First Staff who will report the information to the Reading First Leadership Team for final approval.

**1.F. State Professional Development Plan**

The ultimate goal for all Reading First professional development activities is to provide classroom teachers and other educators with scientifically based knowledge about reading to ensure that all children read well by the end of third grade. In order to meet this challenge, the following objectives are used to plan, implement, and monitor Reading First professional development activities.

**Kentucky Reading First professional development activities will**

- be conducted by reading experts highly knowledgeable in scientifically based reading research.
- done in consultation with other professional development providers (State-wide and National) involved in Reading First initiatives.
- include content as identified in the Blueprint for Professional Development for teachers of reading knowledge, skills, and learning activities in the five essential components of reading.
- ensure Kentucky Primary teachers (K-3) and K-12 special education teachers have access to a varied and full range of professional development experiences.
- ensure administrators and other school leaders participate.
- provide opportunities for all Kentucky schools to participate in professional development.
- disseminate information and resources addressing scientifically based reading instruction.
- focus on the essential components of reading and information about scientifically based instructional strategies, programs, and materials.
- provide instruction in the use of screening, diagnostic, and classroom-based instructional assessments.
- build expertise in scientifically based reading research in each Reading First school to create knowledgeable Reading First Coaches and leaders at the district and school level.

Adhering to these objectives will ensure that the statewide professional development plan is delivered in a consistent, systemic, and comprehensive manner leaving no teacher or administrator behind.

### **Kentucky's Professional Development Overview**

#### **Content**

Kentucky will use the document titled *A Blueprint for Professional Development for Teachers of Reading: Knowledge, Skills, and Learning Activities* to improve a common frame of reference that addresses the four foundation concepts of 1) how the essential components are related, 2) how children learn to read, 3) why some children fail to learn to read well, and 4) how written English is structured. The Reading First professional development institutes will address this content. Additional resources will include *Every Child Reading: An Action Plan* and *Starting Out Right: A Guide to Promoting Children's Reading Success*.

The following overview indicates the four broad phases of the professional development model:

#### **Phase 1: Assess and Analyze**

The skill competency levels of all target groups will be assessed and analyzed. In order to attain competency levels, there will be an initial screening of all target groups based on the content in the *Blueprint for Professional Development of Reading Knowledge, Skills and Learning Activities*, (Moats, L., 2001). Content from the Blueprint will drive all professional development. This analysis will determine the areas of concentration necessary to ensure sound knowledge and application of scientifically based reading research.

#### **Phase 2: Plan and Design**

This common framework will revolve around the understanding of scientifically based reading research; preparation in the five essential components of effective reading instruction (phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, fluency, and comprehension); information and instruction in the use of screening, diagnostic, and classroom-based progress monitoring assessments; and information on instructional strategies, programs, and materials based on SBRR. For the purpose of planning and designing professional development, the KDE Reading Coaches will use the *Blueprint for Professional Development of Reading Knowledge, Skills and Learning Activities*, SBRR and Kentucky standards and documents.

Reading First professional development will include an Assessment Training Workshop. The focus of the assessment training workshop will be to become proficient in the use of the assessment tools; to understand the assessment framework; to understand how to track and monitor the progress of students; and how to use assessment results to modify instructional practices.

#### **Phase 3: Provide and Monitor**

The identified professional development will be provided in a variety of formats and monitored to ensure that it is effectively addressing the needs and improving the competency levels of all target groups. Professional development at the school level will be ongoing and closely monitored by the District and KDE Reading First Coaches. All district level professional development will consist of regular meetings providing opportunities for collaboration between the district and school level Reading First participants. Professional development will be supported at the district and school levels and will include regular meetings, grade meetings, school site visits, and sharing of information and resources that are aligned to scientifically based reading research.

KDE Reading Coaches, District, and School Level Reading Coaches will be expected to complete a minimum of 100 hours of professional development. Reading First schools and primary (K-3), and K-12 special education will participate in a minimum of 80 hours of professional development. Administrators will participate in the Reading First Institutes, school Reading First follow-up sessions, and quarterly sessions for administrators.

#### **Phase 4: Evaluate and Revise**

To ensure a process of continued improvement, the professional development will be constantly monitored. Feedback will be provided to all stakeholder groups using a variety of means. Data to be collected and analyzed will include

- participants' pre and post knowledge of content relating to SBRR.
- reports completed and reported by District and School Reading Coaches on a quarterly basis.
- progress reports completed by School Reading Coach.
- feedback to all Reading First target groups by the Reading First Evaluation Team. This information will be used to constantly inform the design and implementation of Reading First professional development.

#### **Professional Development Timeframe**

Kentucky's statewide professional development plan outlines a six-year design to reach all primary teachers and administrators throughout the state. It will support statewide understanding and implementation of the scientifically based reading research. The framework outlines professional development for the targeted groups (KDE Reading Coaches, District/School Reading Coaches, Primary (k-3) classroom teachers, K-12 Special Education Teachers and Non-Reading First Participants).

The timeframe is built upon a biennium calendar. Each major professional development activity within the two year timeframe is briefly described.

Professional Development Timeframe
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**Years 1-2**

Immediately (dependent upon funding)	Establish: KDE RF staff Evaluation Team RF expert panel	<b>Year-long training</b> Training of KDE Reading Coaches (minimum of 100 hours) Training of District/school reading coaches (minimum of 80 hours) Commence evaluation - provide feedback  Evaluation team provides ongoing feedback.  Regular meetings of reading coaches – school and district.
First three months	Getting started – preliminary meetings conducted by KDE Reading First staff with eligible schools Technical assistance available to eligible schools	
Summer 1 week (minimum of 36 hours)	Reading First Institutes: Primary K-3 teachers and administrators Special Education co operatives: K-12 special education teachers Assessment Training Workshops	
Fall (minimum of 28 hours)	Follow up to Reading First Institutes – content focuses on the application of the SBRR programs and instructional strategies	
Ongoing Professional Development: collaboration between districts/schools/coaches, on line modules, listservs, regional monthly meetings, grade level meetings, study groups, classroom modeling and demonstrations (minimum of 45 hours).		

Brief descriptions**Training for KDE Reading Coaches/District and School Reading Coaches**

Preliminary collaboration has occurred between the KDE Reading First coordinators and the Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts, Dr. Deborah Simmons from the University of Oregon, and local reading experts from Kentucky institutions of higher learning . As a result of that collaboration the content for the year long training will be developed.

The content for this training will be designed in modules focused on developing a sound and comprehensive understanding for scientifically based reading research, SBRR programs and materials, supplementary and intervention materials that are SBRR, valid and reliable assessments, and coaching and facilitating strategies to assist schools and districts.

Professional development for the KDE coaches will begin immediately and continue throughout the duration of the grant. Ongoing professional development will focus on the interactions between district/school reading coaches and staffs to ensure implementation of SBRR programs, strategies, and

assessments. The KDE coaches will be responsible for the development of the Reading First on-line modules, Reading First institute trainings, monitoring regular district/school regional meetings, and refinement of coaching skills and reading expertise.

**Reading First Institutes**

Reading First Institutes will provide the main vehicle for dissemination of scientifically based reading research knowledge to all primary (K-3) and K-12 special education classroom teachers. After District Reading Coaches are trained, the Reading First schools within that district will participate in five-day Kentucky Reading First Institutes. School administrators, primary (K-3) teachers, and K-12 special education teachers in Kentucky Reading First schools will participate in this training.

Throughout the implementation of Reading First, KDE Reading First Staff will consult with other professional development providers including Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. KDE will work to ensure that instructional practices, resources and materials reflect the needs of Kentucky teachers and students, while remaining consistent with scientifically based reading research.

**Ongoing professional development**

The School Reading First Coaches will facilitate follow-ups throughout the year to provide job-embedded professional development that focuses on student progress. Reading First schools will be encouraged to form partnerships with a Kentucky Reading Project Demonstration site or an Early Reading Incentive Grant leadership site for the purpose of allowing school teams to observe effective reading instructional practices supporting scientifically based reading programs.

Listserves will be established for all Reading First participants including the KDE Reading Coaches and District level coaches. The listservs will be used for questions posed by the KDE reading coaches to provide technical assistance in the implementation and application of scientifically based reading research.

Regional monthly meetings will address pertinent topics and will assist District and School Reading Coaches in developing and implementing school level professional development on a regular, consistent basis. Topics will address the five components of effective reading instruction, related strategies, current research on the five essential elements, the analysis of student work, writing and using intensive assistance reading plans for targeted students, intervention and supplementary strategies and models, assessment data and planning instruction and monitoring progress.

The KDE Coaches will lead focus groups for District/School Reading Coaches to discuss needs specific to their Reading First schools.

Professional Development Timeframe
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**Years 3-4**

Ongoing monitoring of implementation by Reading Coaches at state, district and school levels.

Job-embedded professional development focusing on in-depth analysis and assessment of student work linked to instructional practice – district and school reading coaches.

Support at state, school and district levels: regular meetings to report progress of implementation, peer visits, feedback to refine and adjust SBRR instructional practices.

Demonstration sites identified.

Non-Reading First schools participate in State RF professional development institutes.

Reading First Institutes

Reading First Online Modules

Continued professional development of KDE Reading Coaches, district and school coaches: regular monthly meetings, progress monitoring, evaluation team feedback, consultation with other RF professional development providers.

**Brief description****Ongoing monitoring of implementation**

Years 3-4 will focus on sustaining and monitoring effective instructional practices by continuing to build school level capacity through coaching, team teaching and demonstration. The emphasis will be on in-depth support for teachers in implementing effective instructional materials, strategies, and assessments aligned with scientifically based reading research. District and school reading coaches will collaborate on a regular basis with classroom teachers and the Evaluation Team to ensure that continuous progress is made by all students. Teachers will receive appropriate feedback and support to refine and adjust SBRR instructional practices. School coaches will work to assist the School Literacy Team in targeting assistance for those students not making adequate progress by creating an intensive assistance reading plan for each struggling student.

**Reading First Demonstration Sites**

Districts will identify successful schools as Kentucky Reading First Demonstration sites. Schools chosen as Kentucky Reading First Demonstration sites will become part of a network allowing teachers to visit and observe successful implementation of (1) the five effective components of reading instruction, (2) scientifically based reading research instructional materials, programs, and strategies, and (3) effective use of valid and reliable assessments (screening, diagnostic, and outcome measures) to improve reading outcomes for all students.



**Reading First Institutes for Non-Reading First Schools**

Ten Reading Institutes will be provided for Non RF schools. The institutes will be designed using lessons learned from the first year grant-funded Reading First Institutes. Each of the Reading First Institutes will include up to 40 participants. The number of schools participating will vary, depending on the size of the staff. It is anticipated that up to fifty schools will participate each year. Schools participating will receive a one-time award of \$25,000 for stipends, travel, follow-ups, and additional compensation for an identified School Reading Coach. Schools with a student population less than 300 will receive \$12,500.

In order for schools to receive the award they must commit to

1. 70% of the teachers in the school attending the Reading First Institute.
2. Selecting a reading coach from within the school to facilitate a minimum of 18 hours of Reading First follow up sessions. The person identified as a reading coach will have a demonstrated background in scientifically based reading research and instruction.
3. Submitting an end of year school portfolio that includes evidence of effective implementation of the five components of reading instruction (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary development, and comprehension and motivation), a proposed plan outlining how the school will build upon and sustain professional development opportunities focused on scientifically based reading research, and evidence of administrator support and growth throughout the year- long professional development.
4. Agreement to participate in statewide evaluation.

**On-line Modules**

On line courses will be developed during the second year of the Reading First grant. These courses will establish an interactive environment for teachers and administrators to use to extend their knowledge and understanding of the five essential components of effective reading instruction. The online courses will provide video and audio footage of effective implementation of the five components of reading instruction. This medium will support professional development by providing follow-up lessons and discussion boards throughout the school year.

Professional Development Timeframe
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**Year 5 –6**

<p>District and school strategic planning.</p> <p>Conduct Share Fairs.</p> <p>Ongoing monitoring of implementation by Reading Coaches at state, district and school levels.</p> <p>Continued reporting of student progress – state, district, school levels.</p> <p>Provide ongoing professional development support for all RF participants.</p> <p>Ongoing analysis and assessment of student work to drive instructional practice – district and school reading coaches.</p> <p>Support at state, school and district levels: regular meetings to report progress of RF program implementation, peer visits, feedback to refine and adjust SBRR instructional practices.</p> <p>Ten additional non-Reading First schools participate in State RF professional development institutes.</p> <p>Reading First Institutes</p> <p>Reading First Online Modules</p>	<p>Continued professional development of KDE Reading Coaches, district and school coaches: regular monthly meetings, progress monitoring, evaluation team feedback, consultation with other RF professional development providers.</p>
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**Brief description****District and school strategic planning**

The focus of Years 5-6 will be on designing and implementing a strategic plan for district and school sustainability after the end of Kentucky Reading First grant funding. Under the continued leadership of state, district, and school coaches, districts and schools will submit an updated plan that identifies professional development support for individuals in key reading leadership roles, requires a school needs assessment and the resulting goals and objectives for continued improvement of reading and strategies to support new faculty and staff. On-site, job-embedded professional development will focus on the in-depth analysis and assessment of student work to drive instructional practice.

**Reading First Share Fairs**

Districts and schools will come together to share preliminary plans and form cadres for future support. These meetings will serve as “Share Fairs” for districts and schools to highlight effective implementation of the Kentucky Reading First programs.

**Professional Development Competencies**

KDE Reading First Staff and District/School Reading Coaches will conduct the professional development as outlined in the state professional development plan. It is the goal of the KDE to ensure that these individuals are highly trained and knowledgeable in SBRR and instructional practices aligned with RF. The following competencies have been developed to ensure that target groups have attained a comprehensive understanding of SBRR and criteria outlined in the Reading First initiative.

Those conducting professional development must demonstrate their knowledge and expertise in SBRR. They will complete a minimum of 100 hours professional development per year to ensure that they have a sound foundation and understanding of the following:

- Reading programs, instructional materials, instructional strategies, and approaches based on SBRR, including classroom activities and early intervention strategies
- Instruction in administering, interpreting, and informing instruction in the use of reading assessments including screening, diagnostic, ongoing classroom and progress monitoring
- Working with and training of adult learners

The level of expertise of the Reading Coaches will continue to be expanded and refined over the duration of the RF initiative. The training will also allow them to refine skills in the areas of presenting, facilitating, organizing, and managing the professional development.

The minimum level competencies outlined below will ensure that the **KDE Reading First Staff** have the expertise necessary to carry out various professional development in KY Reading First.

Target Group	DRAFT Minimum Level Competencies
Kentucky Department of Education Reading Coaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Knowledge of the role of phonemic awareness in developing reading skills and how to help teachers systematically teach it within classrooms – including manipulating sounds, segmenting words, and blending sounds</li> <li>▪ Knowledge of the role of phonics in developing reading skills and how to help teachers systematically teach it within classrooms – including matching speech to print and how to introduce graphemes to students</li> <li>▪ Knowledge of the role of fluency in developing reading skills and how to help teachers systematically teach it in classrooms – including the importance of oral reading, immediate feedback, accuracy, and inflection</li> <li>▪ Knowledge of the role of vocabulary in developing reading skills and how to help teachers systematically teach it within classrooms – including how to provide direct instruction in teaching speaking, listening, writing and reading vocabulary</li> <li>▪ Knowledge of the role of comprehension in developing reading skills and how to help teachers systematically teach it within classrooms – including strategies and methods that include students’ comprehension skills</li> <li>▪ Operational knowledge of the relationship between the five essential components of reading instruction and the integration of all elements into classroom instruction</li> <li>▪ The ability to assist a district or school in designing and maintaining an assessment plan – including identified points for early intervention</li> <li>▪ The ability to assist a district or school in developing instructional groups based on assessment data</li> <li>▪ The ability to assist a district or school in selecting and implementing SBRR in reading strategies, programs and materials, valid and reliable assessments, and effective monitoring and professional development</li> <li>▪ The ability to assist a district or school in providing direct and systematic instruction in the five components of effective reading instruction (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary development, and comprehension)</li> <li>▪ The ability to provide formal and informal feedback to teachers and administrators concerning instructional practices</li> <li>▪ The ability to address the diverse needs of all learners</li> <li>▪ Quality overall presentation techniques including: decision-making and consensus building skills; communication, organization, conflict - management, group processes, self-evaluation, assess participant’s knowledge, and uses adult learning techniques</li> <li>▪ Knowledge of current staff development research and the ability to synthesize and make connections between instructional innovations and content</li> </ul>

*Source: based on the competencies outlined in The Pennsylvania Department of Education and used by permission.*

District and School Reading Coaches

District and School Reading Coaches will participate in an intense period of training during the first three months. This initial training will ensure that they 1) become familiar with the Reading First legislation, 2) are knowledgeable and have the expertise in scientifically based reading research, 3) can administer, implement, and analyze valid and reliable assessment as a part of the Reading First program, and 4) can plan and design effective professional development activities.

Ongoing training will be established for the duration of the Reading First grant. KDE Reading First Staff will work with the school and district reading coaches facilitating effective ongoing, job-embedded professional development. Working alongside their teacher colleagues will provide opportunities for the coaches to model and demonstrate effective reading instructional practices. Throughout this process coaches will provide frequent and constructive feedback to improve classroom reading instruction. In addition, coaches will be required to assist teachers in the analysis of student progress to quickly identify those students at risk. This early diagnosis will allow immediate intervention to occur for struggling students.

The minimum level competencies outlined below will ensure that the **District and School Reading Coaches** have the expertise necessary to carry out various professional development activities, at the local level, as a part of the Kentucky Reading First plan. They will receive a minimum of 80 hours professional development.

Target Group	DRAFT Minimum Level Competencies
District/School Reading Coaches/School Reading/literacy Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Knowledge of the role of phonemic awareness in developing reading skills</li> <li>▪ Knowledge of the role of phonics in developing reading skills</li> <li>▪ Knowledge of the role of fluency in developing reading skills</li> <li>▪ Knowledge of the role of vocabulary in developing reading skills</li> <li>▪ Knowledge of the role of comprehension in developing reading skills</li> <li>▪ Knowledge of the relationship between the five essential components of reading instruction</li> <li>▪ Ability to establish, maintain, and monitor an assessment plan – including identified points for early intervention</li> <li>▪ Understanding and supporting the need for a cohesive, comprehensive, and planned professional development process for all state – including all K-3 teachers, reading coaches, and K-12 special education</li> <li>▪ Ability to provide additional targeted professional development, technical assistance, or other support for specific staff that may need it in order to effectively implement SBRR</li> <li>▪ Establish instructional groups based on assessment data</li> <li>▪ Ability to assist schools in implementing SBRR</li> <li>▪ Knowledge of the need to provide direct and systematic instruction in the five essential components of reading instruction</li> <li>▪ Knowledge of SBRR comprehensive reading programs, intervention, and supplemental programs and their implementation</li> <li>▪ Ability to effectively communicate with all stakeholders and its impact on student achievement</li> <li>▪ Ability to coordinate intensive assistance reading plans and resources for targeted students</li> </ul>

*Source: based on the competencies outlined in The Pennsylvania Department of Education and used by permission.*

Additional Reading First Professional Development Providers

KDE will establish a list of professional development providers to deliver focused training. A process identifying highly knowledgeable providers of scientifically based reading instruction will be established. Each provider will be required to submit an application or complete an interview to demonstrate a sound knowledge and understanding of SBRR. The following minimum level competencies will determine professional development providers' eligibility. These providers will collaborate with the KDE Reading First staff and coaches throughout the grant period. The professional development providers will be accessible through the KDE Professional Development Bulletin Board.

Targeted Group	DRAFT Minimum Level Competencies
Professional Development Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In-depth knowledge of scientifically based reading research and the five essential components of reading instruction</li> <li>• Knowledgeable of conceptual foundations – the reading process</li> <li>• Solid knowledge regarding the theoretical and scientific underpinnings for understanding literacy development</li> <li>• Knowledgeable of the structure of language, including knowledge of the English speech sound system and its production, the structure of English orthography and its relation to sounds and meaning, and grammatical structure</li> <li>• Recent experience teaching primary grades (K-3)</li> <li>• Experience working with district teacher professional development</li> <li>• Evidence of participation in regional, state, and/or national reading workshops/institutes</li> <li>• Knowledge and experience in implementing formal and informal reading assessments</li> <li>• Understanding of national and state literacy initiatives; and</li> <li>• Knowledgeable of Kentucky's standards and the latest research cited in <i>Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children</i> (Snow, Burns, and Griffin, 1998)</li> </ul>

Source: based on the competencies outlined in *The Pennsylvania Department of Education* and used by permission.

Providers who can demonstrate the above competences will be available to provide technical assistance and professional development for Reading First districts/schools.

Classroom Teachers

The competencies below are those identified as essential for classroom teachers completing the Reading First professional development.

Target Group	DRAFT Minimum Level Competencies
Classroom Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of the role of phonemic awareness in developing reading skills and how to systematically teach it – including manipulating sounds, segmenting words and blending sounds</li> <li>• Knowledge of the role of phonics in developing reading skills including mapping speech to print and how to introduce graphemes to students</li> <li>• Knowledge of the role of fluency in developing reading skills including the importance of oral reading, immediate corrective feedback, accuracy and inflection</li> <li>• Knowledge of the role of vocabulary in developing reading skills including how to provide direct instruction in teaching speaking, listening, writing, and reading vocabulary</li> <li>• Knowledge of the role of comprehension in developing reading skills including strategies and methods that improve students' comprehension skills</li> <li>• Operational knowledge of the relationship between the five essential components of reading instruction and the integration of all elements in classroom instruction</li> <li>• Ability to insure that reading is a priority goal for all students and allocates a minimum of 90 minutes per day to effective reading instruction</li> <li>• Ability to assess all students using screening, diagnostic, and classroom based monitoring tools that are consistent with scientifically based reading research.</li> <li>• Ability to develop flexible instructional groups based on assessment data</li> <li>• Ability to provide direct and systematic instruction in the five essential components (phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, fluency, and comprehension)</li> <li>• Knowledge and implementation of a comprehensive reading program, grounded in scientifically based reading research, including intervention and supplemental reading programs</li> <li>• Ability to communicate effectively to parents and others about scientifically based reading research and its impact on student achievement</li> <li>• Ability to assist fellow colleagues and future teachers in choosing and effectively implementing scientifically based reading research</li> <li>• Ability to develop and implement an intensive assistance reading plan for targeted students</li> </ul>

*Source: based on the competencies outlined in The Pennsylvania Department of Education and used by permission.*



## **1.G. Integration of Proposed Kentucky Reading First Activities with Reading Excellence Activities**

As a round one recipient of Reading Excellence Funds, sub grant-level activities expire in the fall of 2002. It is timely, therefore, for Kentucky to closely examine activities under Reading Excellence and their impact on reading instruction as the state's Kentucky Reading First plan is developed.

The school grants are two-year grants beginning with 2001-2002 school year. An intensive third party evaluation of the state's Reading Excellence Act participation is in process. While this evaluation has not been completed, preliminary reports indicate that Reading Excellence Act-funded schools are changing the nature of literacy instruction and having a positive impact on student learning. Information below has been gleaned from the preliminary interim report and serves to inform the implementation of Reading First in Kentucky.

### **Current situation with REA**

1. Local Incentive Grants were awarded to 29 school districts and encompassed 58 schools. Fourteen different literacy models are being implemented in these funded schools
2. In the majority of schools, literacy models were chosen collaboratively by administrators, members of site-based councils, and teachers.
3. Those submitting proposals most often heard about the opportunity from the Kentucky Department of Education
4. Assistance in preparing proposals for the Local Incentive Grants was both available and useful from many sources: KDE personnel, workshops, and websites; consultants from Regional Service Centers; Kentucky Educational Television programming; consultants from specific reading programs; and local central office personnel.

### **The challenges faced by schools implanting REA have the following implications for the Kentucky Reading First. Reading First will enable the state to do the following:**

1. Achieve and maintain consistency in the implementation of SBRR reading programs  
Under Local Incentive Grants, fourteen different literacy models were implemented in 58 different schools. The implementation of many different literacy models (without a thorough investigation of their scientific base) across diverse contexts resulted in great variations in the nature and quality of literacy instruction. Monitoring the outcomes of such an approach also proved to be difficult.
2. Improve district leadership in literacy  
KRF provides an opportunity for the State to develop a strong leadership team to monitor the implementation of Kentucky RF and progress of districts and schools. The interim evaluation of REA indicates that this is an issue needing to be addressed.

A strong leadership team will ensure that Kentucky plans and delivers literacy instruction that is standards-based. The Kentucky Reading First implementation plan offers a more thoughtful, cohesive plan of implementation than the state was able to provide under Reading Excellence. At the core of these adjustments will be an approach that focuses on scientific reading research and the five components of reading instruction.

### 3. Increase level of technical assistance

A criticism of REA was the availability of limited ongoing support to schools. Budget and staffing restrictions limited the level of support available. This is an area that can be overcome with adequate planning and preparation with Reading First.

Onsite technical assistance to districts will be provided with Reading First. It will include workshops, school visits and grant writing sessions. District reading coaches will provide technical assistance between workshops.

Reading First will have a focused and systemic plan for technical assistance and professional development. The plan will provide ample opportunities for needed support to schools and teachers.

### 4. Meet the needs of the lowest performing students

The emphasis of REA was on assessing overall reading and novice scores. KDE now has access to much more sophisticated test data that can only assist in the application of Reading First and consequently meet the needs of the lowest performing students.

Data from individual assessments administered in intensive study sites indicate that only half of the targeted students were reading on or above grade level by the end of the school year. Unfortunately, some targeted students' scores declined over the course of the year.

When Reading First is combined with an improved data analysis process, KDE will be in a strong position to specifically investigate disaggregated populations, identify specific children in need and provide better item level analysis on the subcomponents-clusters.

## Section II: State Leadership and Management

### **II.A. Statewide Technical Assistance**

From past experiences, Kentucky has learned that well developed and widely delivered technical assistance and professional development are the keys to successful implementation of any new programs. In order to be successful in Kentucky schools, Reading First will have a focused and systemic plan for technical assistance and professional development. The plan will provide ample opportunities for needed support to schools and teachers.

#### **Kentucky Technical Assistance Plan**

To ensure that the Reading First technical assistance is provided by individuals highly knowledgeable in SBRR, the KDE Reading Coaches will be responsible for providing the majority of technical assistance to eligible Reading First LEAs/schools. This assistance will be provided throughout the duration of the grant process.

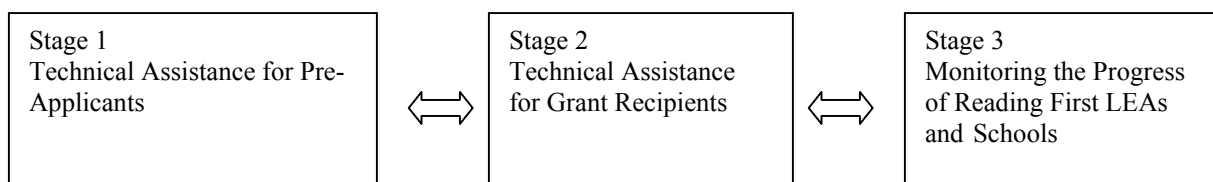
### Content

Kentucky's statewide technical assistance plan will replicate the process and content that has previously been established by the USDOE Reading First team. All Reading First technical assistance will be address the following content:

- scientifically based reading research and the five essential components of effective reading instruction outlined in the Reading First initiative;
- selection and implementation of scientifically based reading programs;
- KDE screening, diagnostic, and classroom based assessment measures;
- development of a comprehensive professional development plan which includes professional development providers who are highly knowledgeable of SBRR;
- writing and submitting a high-quality Reading First application;
- roles and responsibilities of the LEA in monitoring Reading First activities to support effective implementation of all related activities;
- statewide evaluation plan; and
- student data system (2003-2004). The system will enable educators, parents, and community members to track school success in order to participate in educational improvement efforts.

### Process

The three stages for providing technical assistance are outlined below.



#### Stage 1: Technical Assistance for Pre-Applicants

Initial technical assistance will be provided during the first three months of the grant and continued throughout the grant writing process for all eligible Reading First LEAs/schools.

KDE Education Reading First staff and District Reading Coaches will provide a two-day session in each of the eight education regions. Throughout the sessions, the participants will receive an overview of

- 1) Kentucky's Reading First Initiative
- 2) Scientifically based reading research and the five essential components of effective reading instruction
- 3) The grant requirements which include identifying and selecting appropriate reading programs and valid and reliable assessments
- 4) Information about creating and establishing effective professional development to support Reading First.

#### Participants will receive the following resources:

- *KDE Technical Assistance User's Guide* (to be developed by the KDE Reading First Staff),
- *Put Reading First: The Research Building Blocks for Teaching Children to Read (K-3)*
- *Every Child Reading: A Professional Development Guide*.

KDE Reading First staff will provide technical assistance to help schools in their selection of comprehensive reading programs. During this technical assistance session, KDE Reading Coaches will

guide the participants in the use of the Kentucky Program Evaluation Tool to select scientifically based reading programs.

Each KDE Reading Coach will be required to host four regional technical assistance sessions to assist LEAs/schools in a step-by-step process for preparing the grant application. The technical assistance given by KDE Reading First Staff will address the following content for preparing the Reading First grant application. The content to be covered is:

<u>Session 1</u>	In-depth review of the five essential components for effective reading instruction and identifying SBRR reading programs
<u>Session 2</u>	Provide information for districts/schools on SBRR programs and materials that meet the criteria established
<u>Session 3</u>	Choosing and planning for use of valid and reliable screening, diagnostic, and classroom based assessments to guide instruction in Reading First classrooms
<u>Session 4</u>	Completing the LEA Reading First application together

### **Stage 2: Technical Assistance for Grant Recipients**

Once Reading First recipients are announced more intensive technical assistance will be provided from the KDE Reading First Staff. This direct contact will establish collaboration between the District Reading Coach, School Reading Coach and school level reading team in implementing their Reading First grant.

Regular technical assistance will be provided by the KDE Reading First Staff according to the specific needs of the LEA/school(s). During the regional meetings and regular Reading First site visits, the KDE Reading First Staff will be responsible for communicating with the District Reading Coach, School Reading Coach, and School Reading Team.

### **Stage 3: Monitoring the Progress of Reading First LEAs and Schools**

KDE Reading First Staff and the District/School Reading Coaches will monitor student progress and identify students reading below grade level. A statewide system will be used to monitor student progress and will assist KDE Reading First Staff in the identification of programs and specific teachers who are in need of technical assistance. KDE Reading First Staff will guide the District/School Reading Coaches to examine the data and identify emerging needs for those students reading below grade level. Intensive assistant plan will be implemented for those students requiring assistance.

KDE Reading Coaches, District Reading First Coaches, and School Reading Coaches will receive three days of training in the use of the GRADE and DIBELS tests. Classroom teachers will receive two days initial training in the use of these assessment measures with additional follow-up provided by the KDE and School Reading Coaches as monitoring occurs. The KDE Reading Coaches will provide assistance to the School Reading Coaches in monitoring data by looking for trends that flag implementation difficulties or discrepancies from teacher to teacher or from school to school.

Reading First schools will collaborate with the Evaluation Team to establish a consistent system for data collection and progress monitoring. Additional technical assistance and professional development will be made available as required.

The intensive assistance reading plan for the individual child is included in the Reading First plan. The monitoring of students progress and a data system for reporting progress will be consistent across the

state. The School Reading Coach will identify the children reading below grade-level and consult with teachers to determine a plan of action. The School Reading Coach will determine the suitability of resources to meet the needs of students requiring assistance and coordinate the district and school level response. Consultations regarding the needs of the students and how to address their needs will occur between the School Literacy Team and the Reading Coaches. This team effort will help to maximize the level of support for the student.

## **II. B. Building Statewide Infrastructure**

The state's comprehensive plan for literacy has the following specific objectives for age groups directly connected to Kentucky Reading First:

### Birth to Age 5:

- Each child acquires the foundation for reading as measured by outcomes. Kentucky is involved in a 15-state initiative to identify child well-being indicators to improve school foundations and ensure early school success. A set of child outcomes and systems indicators for children from birth through the fourth grade will be identified.
- Children's learning from birth to age 5 is being aligned with the K-12 Program of Studies.

### Primary to Grade 12:

- Each student is a proficient reader by 2014 as measured by the Kentucky Core Content assessment in reading.
- By 2006, all schools will score at or above the national 50<sup>th</sup> percentile in reading on the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills 5.
- By the next National Assessment of Educational Progress testing cycle, the percent of students performing at the proficient level in reading will increase by 5%, followed by 5% increases in each subsequent cycle.

Kentucky has recognized that to achieve its long-term goal of an enhanced quality of life and a high standard of living for all its citizens, literacy levels must be raised. Clearly, there is a direct correlation between economic vitality of a state and the literacy health of its residents.

Just as clearly, certain conditions must be met if the state is to realize its objective of being home to a fully literate population. The following statements reflect the consensus of participants in the 2001 Literacy Summit and members of the Kentucky Literacy Partnership as well as research and best practices. The "Conditions for Literacy Success" are very much in line with the basis for the Kentucky Reading First program. They are intended to serve as a framework for the Partnership agencies as they refine their missions, establish policies, develop programs and implement services to increase literacy in Kentucky.

The Conditions for Literacy Success are

1. supportive, participating families that value reading;
2. early diagnosis and evaluation with appropriate individual intervention for students who struggle with reading at all levels;
3. content area reading instruction in all academic areas;
4. acknowledgement and ownership by communities of the importance of reading that leads

- to high literacy attainment as a means to improve the quality of life;
- 5. adequate time devoted directly to the teaching of reading;
- 6. engaging instruction in a supportive environment that will motivate students to achieve and value education;
- 7. well-prepared and supported teachers at all levels who have a deep understanding and knowledge of the latest research and processes needed to teach students to read in all content areas; and
- 8. leadership and policy direction at all levels that support reading and lead to high literacy attainment for all Kentuckians.

The KDE staff are active members of the Partnership. The KDE has pledged its support to the statewide plan for all key agencies in the state with a charge around literacy to be held annually accountable to the development of the eight conditions for literacy success.

## **II. C. State Management Plan**

The Kentucky Reading First program will be managed in the Office of Academic and Professional Development, which currently administers preschool and primary programs, Even Start, and the Early Reading Incentive Grants. Two Frankfort-based staff will devote 100% of their time to Kentucky Reading First and Early Reading implementation. Ten Kentucky Reading First Coaches will be hired by KDE to facilitate regional technical assistance and professional development and insure program monitoring, evaluation, and accountability.

Kentucky will use Reading First funding to successfully carry out the state's plan. The following budget overview show how the funding will be allocated.

### **Grants- \$10,993,997**

Grants of approximately \$170,000 per school per year to include:

- Approximately \$50,000 for salary per reading coach
- \$1,500 to support the statewide evaluation
- \$33,500 for teacher stipends, materials, books, etc.
- The balance for implementation costs of selected reading programs

Statewide Professional Development- \$1,786,521 +\$300,000 from TA funds = \$2,086,000

\$600,000 for salaries of KDE reading coaches;

\$400,000 for ten Reading First Institutes and expenses for reading coaches

\$1,086,000 for allocations to non-Reading First funded schools for professional development and leadership training

- Year One: \$1,086,000 for comprehensive, year-long job embedded professional development for KDE, district and school coaches
- Years Two through Six: \$25,000 per school (\$12,500 for schools with populations of less than 300) Approximately 50 schools per year funded.

Technical Assistance- \$687,123 - \$300,000 to PD funds = \$387,000

- \$70,000 to support statewide evaluation
- \$247,000 for program awareness and implementation support

Planning, Administration, and Reporting- \$70,000

- \$20,000 for grant selection process
- \$50,000 for administration and operating

## **Yearly Benchmarks and Goals for Kentucky Reading First**

### Year One (2003-2004) Focus

- select and train KDE Reading First Staff, district Reading First coaches, school Reading First coaches, teachers and administrators
- provide eligible LEAs with information about Kentucky Reading First grant opportunities
- provide eligible LEAs with information about scientifically based reading research and program requirements
- contract with evaluator and establish baseline for the evaluation
- provide ongoing technical assistance to Kentucky Reading First schools

### Year Two (2004-2005) Focus

- provide ongoing technical assistance and site visits to Kentucky Reading First schools
- provide professional development for additional non-Kentucky Reading First schools
- show gains in all required areas in the report to the Kentucky Board of Education and federal Kentucky Reading First program coordinator
- spotlight Kentucky Reading First at the Governor's Literacy Summit

### Year Three (2005-2006) Focus

- analyze data from evaluation and data provided by schools and LEAs to determine sites for continuation/discontinuation
- bring additional LEAs into the program through a second round of grant competition pending appropriations increase
- provide professional development for additional non-Kentucky Reading First schools
- show continued gains in all required areas in the report to the Kentucky Board of Education and federal Kentucky Reading First program coordinator.
- provide professional development for additional non-Kentucky Reading First schools to provide ongoing technical assistance and site visits to Kentucky Reading First schools
- provide professional development for additional non-Kentucky Reading First schools
- celebrate Kentucky's mid-point success in Kentucky Reading First participation at the Governor's Literacy Summit

### Year Four (2006-2007) Focus

- show continued gains in all required areas in the report to the Kentucky Board of Education and federal Kentucky Reading First program coordinator
- provide ongoing technical assistance and site visits to Kentucky Reading First schools
- provide professional development for additional non-Kentucky Reading First schools
- establish Kentucky Reading First Demonstration Sites at the most successful implementers participating as Kentucky Reading First Continuation Sites

### Year Five (2007-2008) Focus

- show continued gains in all required areas in the report to the Kentucky Board of Education and federal Kentucky Reading First program coordinator.
- provide ongoing technical assistance and site visits to Kentucky Reading First schools

- provide professional development for additional non-Kentucky Reading First schools
- promote professional development visits to Kentucky Reading First Demonstration Sites
- begin development of long range plan for continued implementation of scientifically based reading programs beyond Kentucky Reading First funding period (2008 and beyond)

#### Year Six (2008-2009) Focus

- show continued gains in all required areas in the final report to the Kentucky Board of Education and federal Kentucky Reading First program coordinator
- provide ongoing technical assistance and site visits to Kentucky Reading First schools
- provide professional development for additional non-Kentucky Reading First schools
- promote professional development visits to Kentucky Reading First Demonstration Sites
- finalize plan for continued implementation of scientifically based reading programs beyond Kentucky Reading First funding period (2009 and beyond)

#### **Coordination with Other Literacy Programs in the State**

Recognizing the gravity of its literacy problems, the Commonwealth of Kentucky has launched numerous initiatives over the past decade to address educational deficits at all age levels.

- The Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990 (KERA) focused on K-12 school reform and instituted school-based accountability measured by state assessments.
- The Postsecondary Education Improvement Act of 1997 reformed the higher education system and set ambitious goals of increased rates of college-going.
- The Governor's Early Childhood Initiative (KIDS Now), passed into law in 2000, uses the funds from the tobacco settlement to improve health and educational services for children ages 0-4.
- The Adult Education Act of 2000 provided increased funding to reach the estimated 1 million Kentucky adults at the two lowest levels of literacy. (Note: Kentucky's population is 4 million.)
- In 2001, state funding for family literacy was doubled, making family literacy services a reality in every Kentucky county in 2002 – 2003.

Significantly, the last two years have also seen an increased commitment to coordination of efforts among all agencies responsible for literacy. In June 2001, the Literacy Partnership held its first Governor's Literacy Summit. Representatives from all literacy agencies agreed on common "Conditions for Success" in literacy and will report on progress yearly (previously mentioned in the overview section). The Literacy Partnership set an overall goal for literacy attainment in the state, and will bring all the agencies together on a regular basis to report on programs and results. The Kentucky Reading First program will continue to be reviewed by the Literacy Partnership to ensure coordination and to prevent duplication of efforts.

Examples of recent multi-agency efforts that have drawn on scientifically based reading research include:

- The Collaborative Center for Literacy Development (CCLD) recently launched the Kentucky Adult Educator's Literacy Institute (KAELI) in coordination with the Department for Adult Education and Literacy. Using a researched-based model that has already proved successful with teachers in the K-12 system, KAELI provides a year-long, rigorous course in adult literacy. The goal is to ensure that at least one adult educator in every county receives this training over the next few years, creating a strong network of literacy instructors with a thorough grounding in scientifically based reading research as it applies to adult learners.



- The Kentucky Institute for Family Literacy is currently piloting a family literacy backpack program with 18 programs that includes parent take-home activities designed to address the five components of literacy. The project includes a training session for family literacy providers on putting the reading research into practice. Statewide rollout to 150 programs is planned for September 2002.
- The P-16 Council is made up of representatives from the Kentucky Board of Education, the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education, the Education Professional Standards Board, Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development, and the Cabinet for Workforce Development. Created in 1999 and advancing both KERA and Postsecondary Education Improvement Act of 1997, the P-16 Council advises the Board of Education and the Council on Postsecondary Education on the education of teachers, the alignment of competency standards, and the elimination of barriers impeding student transition from preschool through the baccalaureate. The CPE has also provided grant funding to create local P-16 councils to address coordination issues in their regions.
- The Kentucky Virtual University and the Kentucky Virtual Library provide professional development resources for Kentucky teachers and will support dissemination of reading research through courses and databases.

Representatives from all the above initiatives serve on the Literacy Partnership and can build Kentucky Reading First research and approaches into their program development efforts.

## **Section III: State Reporting and Evaluation**

### **III. A. Evaluation Strategies**

The Evaluation Strategies for Kentucky Reading First will have three primary objectives:

1. to assess the effectiveness of the Reading First activities for the district as well as for individual participating schools;
2. to inform decisions regarding continuation of funding for participating schools; and
3. to provide information to participating schools and LEAs, as well as other schools in Kentucky, about effective reading instruction that will enable them to continue improving their reading outcomes.

The Kentucky Reading First plan proposes to use the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development as the evaluator of the Kentucky Reading First Initiative. The Collaborative Center for Literacy Development (CCLD) was established by Senate Bill 186, passed in 1998 by the Kentucky General Assembly. Administered through the Council on Post Secondary Education, it is operated at the University of Kentucky in partnership with Eastern Kentucky University, Kentucky State University, Morehead State University, Murray State University, Northern Kentucky University, University of Louisville, Western Kentucky University and the National Center for Family Literacy.

The CCLD has established a history of conducting scientifically based reading research. It has conducted detailed evaluations of numerous large scale reading initiatives and state funded reading projects in Kentucky, including the Early Reading Incentive Grants, The Kentucky Reading Project and the Kentucky Adult Literacy Educators Institute. As a result of its continued involvement in research in Kentucky and its collaboration with all public universities and the National Center for Family Literacy,

CCLD is already familiar with the state's early reading initiatives and is well positioned to conduct this research.

The CCLD evaluation will employ both quantitative (evaluative, descriptive and inferential) and qualitative (evaluative, descriptive, action research, and ethnographic) procedures. The overall approach will be to develop a multi-layered, in-depth scientifically based research process that not only evaluates the overall effectiveness of Kentucky Reading First in Kentucky, but also ensures regular ongoing input into the professional development process.

This evaluation examines the effectiveness of Kentucky Reading First from three perspectives:

- 1. Kentucky Reading First program implementation**
- 2. Reading achievement gains of students K-3**
- 3. The impact of Kentucky Reading First on reducing the numbers of students reading below grade level**

The following are the proposed *evaluation questions* and *evaluation activities* for each of these three perspectives.

## **1. Kentucky Reading First program implementation**

### ***A. Evaluation Questions***

#### **1. State and district implementation plan**

- How is the plan to implement Kentucky Reading First carried out at the SEA, LEA and school level?
- How effectively and efficiently does the implementation plan meet SEA, LEA and school-based needs in reading?
- What aspects of the implementation plan contributed to the programs success?
- What aspects of the implementation plan need to be improved or modified?
- 

#### **2. Classroom implementation**

- How do classroom teachers implement Kentucky Reading First?
- How are the five components of Kentucky Reading First taught?
- What are the matches and mismatches between classroom practice and Kentucky Reading First?
- What changes in literacy instruction have resulted from undertaking Kentucky Reading First?
- What evidence of change is there in the way teachers program, plan and assess their instruction?
- What instructional materials and programs are being used to support Kentucky Reading First? What evidence is there that the materials/programs contributed to improved reading achievement in the classroom?
- How have SEA, LEAs, schools and teachers benefited from Kentucky Reading First?

### ***B. Evaluation activities***

#### **1. State and district activities**

##### **a. Interviews**

- Administrators at the state, district and school will be interviewed every six months regarding the issues and concerns of implementation.
- Focus groups consisting of the KDE Reading Coaches and District Reading Coaches will be conducted every three months.

- b. Periodic surveys of staff regarding implementation.
  - Program evaluations will be completed at the Kentucky Reading First Institutes, at the mid-point of the professional development program, and on the final day of completion.
  - Periodic surveys that relate to instructional practices and the five components of Kentucky Reading First will be conducted by District Reading Coaches and completed as part of the regular meeting scheduled for Kentucky Reading First participants.

## 2. Classroom activities

- Observations
- Periodic observations of the teaching of reading will take place at ten case study sites.
- Observations at the school level will be completed by School Reading Coaches.
- The District Reading Coach will complete school visits and observations.
- As a component of the Kentucky Reading First Institute, teachers will develop and complete Literacy Action Plans and reflections of their classroom practices.
- School Reading Coaches will complete analysis of teacher logs and lesson plans.
- Teachers will complete ongoing reflections of changing classroom practices as a component of the Kentucky Reading First Institute follow up days.
- District and School Reading Coaches will conduct teacher interviews pertaining to reading instruction.
- A Teacher Efficacy Survey will be completed on the first and final day of the Kentucky Reading First Institute. This survey provides information about the changing nature of teachers' understandings of, and attitudes towards, literacy learning.

## **2. Reading achievement gains of students K-3**

### ***A. Evaluation questions***

- How have students benefited from Kentucky Reading First?
- Is there evidence that overall school achievement results in reading have changed as a result of Kentucky Reading First?
- How has the reading achievement of individual students changed as a result of being involved in Kentucky Reading First?
- What are the scientifically based reading research models or reading programs selected by schools and what is the effectiveness of these programs/models as measured by early literacy assessment instruments?
- How have Kentucky Reading First schools successfully narrowed the reading achievement results for subgroup populations – low income, major racial/ethnic groups, LEP, and special education K-3?

### ***B. Evaluation activities***

Student achievement will be evaluated using a variety of valid and reliable measures including

- a reading achievement test – Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) and CTB/Terra Nova
- a diagnostic assessment – Group reading assessment and diagnostic evaluation (GRADE)
- DIBELS screening and outcome measure

- The Kentucky assessment plan calls for LEAs to describe in their subgrant applications how they will assess vocabulary and comprehension in primary (Grades K-3)

#### 1. Outcomes for program effectiveness - Reading achievement test

The Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) is part of an integrated program of testing, accountability, and curricular and instructional support that is coupled with wide-sweeping changes in school finance, governance, and organization in Kentucky. A panel of national experts, the National Technical Advisory Panel for Assessment and Accountability, oversees the reliability and validity of the CATS system.

#### 2. Outcomes for program effectiveness - Terra Nova

Terra Nova will be used as a summative evaluation of Reading First school programs at the end of the primary years (grade 3). The Terra Nova assesses phonemic awareness, phonics and other word recognition strategies, vocabulary, and comprehension. This summative data will provide uniform information on student achievement across all student populations in Reading First schools.

#### 3. Diagnostic – Group reading assessment and diagnostic evaluation (GRADE)

The GRADE is a non-negotiable component of Kentucky Reading First. It is a scientific research-based, norm-referenced, group administered assessment of reading for pre-kindergarten to young adult learners. Trained Reading Coaches will administer the GRADE K-2. The GRADE has been selected because it is a diagnostic tool that gives teachers additional information pertaining to students' reading skills. It informs teachers about what skills students have and what skills they need to be taught. It is also a useful tool for following progress and monitoring growth. Additional information will become available in schools where diagnostic assessments are linked to reading programs.

#### 4. Screening/Progress Monitoring and Outcomes: Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS)

DIBELS will serve as a screening, progress monitoring, outcome assessment. It will serve as a tool for assessing phonemic awareness, phonics, and fluency. The instruments that will be used in the entry-level primary (Kindergarten) are Segmentation Fluency (a measure of phonemic awareness) and Letter Naming Fluency (a (grade 1) are Segmentation Fluency and Nonsense Word Fluency (a measure of alphabetic reading skill). Progress monitoring will occur in February and May in P2 (grade 1) and P3 (grade 2) are Oral Reading Fluency (a measure of reading accuracy and fluency in text) and Nonsense Word Fluency. In P4 (grade 3), progress in fluency will be monitored using the Oral Reading Fluency measure. For "at-risk" students, Segmentation Fluency and Nonsense Word Fluency will be administered as necessary.

#### 5. Classroom-based screening

The Kentucky assessment plan calls for LEAs to describe in their subgrant applications how they will assess vocabulary and comprehension in primary (Grades K-3). This information will be collated by the School Reading Coach and used to inform instruction on a class and school basis. The collated information will be considered in this evaluation. Work samples will be collected and analyzed by classroom teachers as part of the training program.

### **3. Kentucky Reading First program effectiveness in reducing the numbers of students reading below grade level**

#### **A. Evaluation questions**

- Which schools have successfully increased the number of students reading at grade level or higher when the results are disaggregated by low-income, major racial/ethnic groups, English language learners, and special education?
- What factors have contributed to this change?
- What instructional materials and reading programs are implemented in these schools?
- What do the major stakeholders (administrators, teachers, parents, students) regard as being significant change factors in literacy practices in these schools?

#### **B. Evaluation activities**

- In-depth case studies will be completed of ten schools where there has been a significant improvement in the reading achievement results of students in the categories listed above.
- School Reading Coaches will document the change process that occurs in their respective schools.
- Literacy Action Plans will be documented and completed as a component of the professional development training. These plans will be analyzed in relation to implementation strategies that have impacted on the above categories of students.
- The evaluation will compare the results of CATS and CTBS results for participating in Kentucky Reading First and those that are demographically similar and are not participating.

### **Timeline**

The following timeline outlines the evaluation process for the first year of implementation. In subsequent years the process would remain similar. Most of the data collected from classroom teachers will be completed as an integral component of the Kentucky Reading First Institute. At the completion of Year 1, the timeline will be reviewed and adjusted.

### **2003-2004**

#### **1. Evaluation of State and District Implementation**

##### *Ongoing documentation of the process:*

- Interviews with administrators, KDE trainers, Reading Coaches – every three months during the initial stages of implementation
- Observations and field notes by research assistants
- Focus group meetings – every three months
- Periodic surveys of staff – district and school based meetings

##### *Throughout Kentucky Reading First Institute*

- Teacher efficacy survey – Day 1 and final day
- Program evaluation – final day
- Literacy action plans – developed, implemented and analyzed
- Classroom observations – District and School Reading Coaches
- Teacher logs and lessons plans – analyzed
- Descriptive snapshots of literacy instruction pre- and post- Institute
- Teacher interviews - District and School Reading Coaches

**2. Evaluation of reading achievement gains of students K-3**

March/April

CATS, CTBS – state wide

Month 1 of Implementation

GRADE conducted by School Reading Coaches

DIBELS – completed by classroom teachers

Classroom teachers – commence formal and informal classroom assessment linked to Kentucky Reading First Institute

Identify 10 case study schools – begin observations, interviews, and collection of data

Mid year

GRADE conducted by School Reading Coaches

Classroom teachers – ongoing formal and informal classroom assessment linked to Kentucky Reading First Institute

Analysis and progress report completed by School and District

Reading Coaches – submitted to Evaluation Team

Interim Report – describing 20 case study schools

End of year

GRADE conducted by School Reading Coach

DIBELS – completed by classroom teachers

Classroom teachers – ongoing formal and informal classroom assessment linked to Kentucky Reading First Institute

Analysis and progress reports completed by School and District

Reading Coaches – submitted to Evaluation Team

Collate district results, complete analysis and report.

Analysis completed of progress of twenty case study schools

**3. Kentucky Reading First program effectiveness in reducing the numbers of students reading below grade level**

Month 1 of Implementation

Identify 10 case study schools – positive gains for sub group populations

Mid year

Interviews with administrators, teachers, parents, students

Classroom observations completed by research team

Collect work samples, test results, teacher's lesson plans, and programming – analyze and complete case reports

Years 1-6

Survey schools reading programs and models used

Compare and contrast achievement results of CATS, CTB/Terra

Nova for Kentucky Reading First Schools/non Kentucky Reading

First schools and examine in relation to reading programs and models being used

**Evaluation and Funding Determinations**

The evaluation will be used as a basis to determine 1) the need for intervention during the first 27 months, and 2) funding continuation at the end of 27 months. Participating schools and LEAs will be reviewed according to the three evaluation perspectives—(program implementation, reading achievement gains of students K-3 and reduction of numbers of students reading below grade level)—when determining if sufficient progress has been made to warrant continued funding.

### **III. B. State Reporting**

KDE Reading First Staff will report annually to the Kentucky Board of Education and subsequently the federal Kentucky Reading First program on the state's progress in program implementation.

The report will include information on the following:

- Reduction in the number of primary students reading below grade level in Kentucky Reading First LEAs
- Increase in the percentage of students reading at grade level or higher, disaggregated by low-income, major racial/ethnic groups, LEP, and special education
- Districts and schools making the largest gains in reading achievement

The Reading First Leadership Team will also receive the report and discuss implications for Kentucky's literacy plan.

### **III. C. Participation in National Evaluation**

The Kentucky Department of Education and subgrant local education agencies will, if asked, participate in the national evaluation of the Kentucky Reading First program.

## **Section IV: Classroom Level Impact**

### **IV.A. Key Reading First Classroom Characteristics**

The ultimate goal of all Reading First related activities is to provide the greatest impact on teaching and learning at the classroom level. This impact will be greatly determined by the teacher's level of expertise to effectively implement scientifically based reading research as a part of daily classroom instruction. Kentucky's professional development and technical assistance in the Reading First program is designed to provide teachers and administrators with guidance as they make decisions about effective scientifically based reading instruction in classrooms. The KDE Reading First Staff and administrators will be provided with specific criteria to ensure effective implementation, practice, and use of materials. The KY Reading First proposal will ensure that all instructional practices are consistent with scientifically based reading research by exhibiting the key characteristics outlined below.

#### **Key Reading First Classroom Characteristics**

##### **Supportive Environment**

- A protected 90 minutes for effective reading instruction
- Students are actively engaged in reading activities
- Collections of books and texts to support units of study, genre, and reading abilities are accessible
- Multiple grouping techniques (i.e. whole group, small and flexible groups, and one-to-one instruction) can be observed
- Evidence of clear expectations for student reading achievement are present
- Established routines are in place so children can focus on literacy tasks
- Teacher-child is open-ended and elicits child-to-child discourse and interactions
- Student work is displayed in the classroom
- Family and community involvement support the Reading First classroom

**Classroom Instruction**

- Implementation of a comprehensive reading program and materials based on scientifically based reading research
- Direct and explicit instruction in the five essential components of effective reading instruction (phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, comprehension, and fluency)
- Instructional reading program is aligned with state mandated Program of Studies, explicit instructional strategies, coordinated instructional sequence
- Modeling, coaching, and scaffolding strategies are used to enable the students to experience reading success
- Decodable texts are used to support early reading development and skills
- Explicit, planned skill development is present during flexible group instruction, based on student needs and assessment
- Flexible groups are fluid, allowing movement, based on ongoing assessment data
- Ample practice opportunities are provided daily to support individual reading progress
- Daily instructional decisions are driven by data gathered from using a comprehensive set of assessment tools (screening, diagnostic, and classroom-based monitoring)
- Intervention strategies, aligned with classroom instruction, are implemented systematically to target students not making sufficient progress

**Reading First Teacher Characteristics**

- Knowledge is demonstrated about learning theory, scientifically based reading research, and effective reading instruction
- Understands and can effectively teach the five essential components of reading instruction (phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, comprehension, and fluency)
- Understands a variety of strategies that will meet the needs of a diverse group of students
- Uses screening, diagnostic, and ongoing assessments and progress-monitoring strategies that inform instructional decisions
- Implements effective classroom management strategies that allows for flexible grouping and high levels of time on task to maximize student learning
- Actively participates in professional development focused around Reading First concepts
- Explicitly models and scaffolds reading instruction for all students

Daily instructional decisions will be made based on the results of ongoing, classroom monitoring assessment tools. Reading First teachers will follow a systematic plan for assessing students on a frequent and regular basis. This information will be used to identify struggling students early and provide immediate classroom intervention when necessary. Research states that “some children, including those with special needs, may never learn to read unless they are taught in an explicit, systematic way by a knowledgeable teacher using a well-designed instructional approach that is adapted to their unique strengths and needs” (National Research Council, 1998). Classroom teachers and the School Reading/Literacy Team will be required to create an intensive reading assistance plan for individual students identified at risk of reading failure.

Intervention practices in all Reading First classrooms will be designed to alter the conditions of instruction, such as providing extra instructional time during the school day (National Research Council, 1998). The effective reading interventions outlined below will ensure that students have the knowledge and skills that will have the highest impact on learning to read using screening, diagnostic, and classroom-based assessments.



**Effective Reading Interventions**

- Group students into groups of three to five according to their instructional needs
- Provide targeted instruction three to five times per week
- Assure additional instruction aligns with core reading instruction
- Provide ongoing and systematic corrective feedback to students
- Provide extended practice in the critical elements of reading instruction based on students' needs
- Increase time for word study and build fluency to improve automatic word recognition and rate of reading
- 
- Use systematic, classroom-based instructional assessment to document student growth and inform instruction

Source: National Reading Panel, 2000; National Research Council, 1998; Vaughn, Gersten, and Chard, 2000.

The goal for effective implementation of Reading First strategies, assessments, and instructional intervention materials is to accelerate the performance of students who may be reading below grade level. Research has demonstrated that teaching expertise makes a significant difference in the rate and depth of students' literacy growth and that highly effective educators share similar characteristics (Block, 2001a; Bond, and Dykstra, 1967/1997; International Reading Association, 2000; Pressley, Allington, Wharton, McDonald, Block, and Morrow, 2001; Ruddell, 1997). Similar research has been conducted in Kentucky primary schools to investigate qualities of teaching expertise that distinguish highly effective instruction in reading. Commonalities were found in the KY studies conducted by Cantrell, (1998-99) (*Effective Teaching and Literacy Learning: A Look Inside Primary Classrooms and Characteristics and Attributes of Primary Programs and Practices*, UK, 2001) which correlate with national research and another study, *Characteristics of Exemplary First-Grade Literacy Instruction* (Morrow, Tracey, Woo, and Pressley, 1999). Kentucky's participation in Reading First will help the Commonwealth ensure such research-based classrooms and continue on the path toward every child reading on grade level by the end of the primary years (third grade).

The Kentucky Reading First plan will promote the consistent use of scientifically based reading research to support good teaching in the primary grades.

**IV.B. Coherence and Conclusion**

Kentucky's detailed outline for implementing Reading First ensures a coherent statewide plan clearly focused on improving the reading achievement of the state's primary students through the systemic and deliberate infusion of scientifically based reading research throughout the literacy efforts in our K-3 Primary Programs.

We feel confident with this resubmission that we have addressed earlier Panel concerns about the coherence of our overall plan by fiercely focusing on scientifically based reading research in every aspect of our implementation plan. We feel our careful attention to the feedback from the expert panel and USDOE program staff relative to the areas of professional development, reading assessments, and the evaluation of LEA selected reading programs has significantly improved the overall coherence of the plan.

We are eager to implement this exciting opportunity that will ensure all Kentuckians can read, and read well, by fourth grade.